4
GV
1078
FT MEADE
GenColl

CARD SHARPERS

THEIR TRICKS EXPOSED
OR
THE ART OF ALWAYS WINNING

WITH EXPLANATORY DIAGRAMS

BY ROBERT-HOUDIN

ex Libris
Fulton Oursler

Fred Pearson

CARD-SHARPERS

THEIR TRICKS EXPOSED, OR THE ART OF ALWAYS WINNING

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

ROBERT-HOUDIN

BY

WILLIAM J. HILLIAR

WITH EXPLANATORY DIAGRAMS

CHICAGO
FREDERICK J. DRAKE & CO.
PUBLISHERS

4-GV
1078

COPYRIGHTED, 1902
BY FREDERICK J. DRAKE & CO.
CHICAGO, ILL., U.S.A.

Gift
Miss Fullam, Berwyn
Nov. 10, 1955

PREFACE.

On many occasions when I have been honored by the bench by being consulted as an expert in trials for cheating, I have been frequently impressed by the fact that the want of knowledge of the subject has been an impediment in the path of the judge. How, indeed, could he be expected to understand the subtle schemes of the professional sharper? How put his finger on the point in question, when he knows nothing of the rascal's cunning maneuvers?

By a singular contradiction to the ordinary course of justice, while the offender, armed with tricks and audacity, is strong, the judge is practically without defense and helplessly weak.

Devoted for a part of my life to the study of conjuring, and having given my time to the amusement of the public, I am of opinion that the time has arrived to return to my supporters, who have honored me with their applause, a not equivocal mark of my gratitude in devoting my leisure to their service.

I have therefore written this work, the object of which may be summed up in this self-evident truth: "Enlighten the dupes and there will be no more cheats."

But is it sufficient that a truth be uncontestable for it to be uncontested? I do not believe it; and, to prove it, I myself advance to meet a probable objection.

In unveiling the tricks of card-sharpers, do not you fear to supply certain unfortunate players with the skill to correct the rigors of fortune?

I might content myself by replying that in mak-

ing public the following revelations, I am acting on principles long since firmly established by the press and public writers generally. Nevertheless, to respond more directly to the objection I have stated, I will add that my exposures of trickery and tricks, although quite sufficient to put the public on their guard, are not enough for those desirous of executing them.

Suppose, for instance, that I had not taken that precaution, what would be the result? Why, that for one already half-perverted person who might utilize my culpable principles, thousands of dupes would by taking warning be protected.

But if by these exposures bad instincts are awakened, what are we to say of the numberless books on duelling, where the art of killing his fellow-man is methodically taught?

Should not we fear that the principles inculcated in such books may lead to criminal actions?

I have myself an excellent opinion of the respectable classes, and hope that the reading of my book will inspire no thought beyond that of guarding themselves against the tricks of sharpers.

Every one then in taking his part at cards, strong in the information I have imparted, will read to his profit the line of Virgil:

*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.**

* I dread even a present from a Greek.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

Attention is called to the use of the term Knave instead of Jack. There being no authority for either, I adhere to the word Knave, for it is the term universally used by the French.—Robert-Houdin.

Contents.

CHAPTER		PAGE
	PREFACE	3
	A DANGEROUS TEACHER	5
I.	THE MODERN GREEKS	14
II.	THE GREEK OF THE FASHIONABLE WORLD	19
III.	THE GREEK OF THE MIDDLE CLASS	22
IV.	THE GREEK OF THE GAMBLING HELL	27
V.	A GREEK CAUGHT IN THE ACT	36
VI.	THE GAMBLER RAYMOND AND HIS INFALLIBLE SYSTEM	42
VII.	INSTRUCTIVE HISTORY OF A GREEK	54
VIII.	ILLEGAL GAMBLING HELLS—ROBBERS AND ROBBED	60
IX.	SECRET GAMBLING HELLS	67
X.	BLEEDING THE DOCTOR	74
XI.	THE PASTE RING	79
XII.	AN INFAMOUS AMBUSH	92

Part II.

	THE METHOD	113
	INTRODUCTION	114
I.	THE FALSE CUT	115
II.	DESTROYING THE CUT	117
III.	THE PASS STROKE	119
IV.	THE JUMP	121
V.	THE BIG CARD	122
VI.	THE BRIDGE	123
VII.	DRAWING THE CARD	125
VIII.	WITHDRAWING CARDS	128
IX.	PLACING THE CARDS	130
X.	SEEING THE CARD	131
XI.	CHANGING THE PACKS	132
XII.	THE BOX UNDER THE CUFF	135
XIII.	FALSE SHUFFLE	136
	(*a*) THE CLASSIFIED SHUFFLE	136
	(*b*) THE PARTIAL SHUFFLE	137

CHAPTER		PAGE
	(*c*) THE FAN	137
	(*d*) THE SWALLOW'S TAIL	138
XIV.	—CUT CARDS	139
XV.	—MARKED CARDS	141
XVI.	—CARDS THAT STICK OR SLIP	142
XVII.	—CARDS NOT CUT ON THE SQUARE	143
XVIII.	—PRICKED CARDS	144
XIX.	—CARDS WITH MARKED EDGES	145
XX.	—CARDS WITH BENT CORNERS	146
XXI.	—CARDS WITH DESIGNS AT BACK	147
XXII.	—SPOTTING THE BACKS OF CARDS	148
XXIII.	—THE CHAPLET	153
XXIV.	—THE MARKING RING	156
XXV.	—THE SNUFF-BOX	158
XXVI.	—APPLICATION OF THE PRECEDING PRINCIPLES	159
XXVII.	—TRICK AT PIQUET	161
	(*a*)	161
	(*b*)	162
	(*c*) SUBTRACTION AND SUBSTITUTION	165
XXVIII.	—TRICK AT ECARTE	166
XXIX.	—LANSQUENET—CONCEALED CARDS	169
XXX.	—OBSERVATION ON GAMES FOR FOUR PLAYERS	171
XXXI.	—AMUSING TRICKERIES	173
XXXII.	—PLEASANT GAME OF ECARTE	175
XXXIII.	—TRICK AT ECARTE	178
XXXIV.	—ANOTHER TRICK AT ECARTE	179
XXXV.	—BACCARAT	181
XXXVI.	—WHIST	182
XXXVII.	—BOUILLOTTE	184
XXXVIII.	—BEZIQUE	186

CARD-SHARPERS,

Their Tricks Exposed.

A DANGEROUS TEACHER.

Whatever price the reader may think the exposure of the following tricks may be worth, he certainly will never pay as dearly for their knowledge as I have done. You will easily understand that I have not been able to draw from my own brain all the ruses and rascalities of which the art of the sharper and cheat is composed. I have therefore drawn them one by one from the cheats themselves and at times divined them.

My researches have been both difficult and dangerous; difficult because sharpers do not readily allow one to discover a trick on which their living depends; dangerous because inquiries among such people may lead to serious danger. The following fact proves it:

When I was a conjurer in the bud I often visited, as I have related in my "Confidences," a maker of instruments used by conjurers named Father Roujol, in the hope of meeting there some master or even amateur of the art.

Roujol had taken a liking to me; he was aware of my passion, and found pleasure in furnishing me with occasions of gaining instruction.

One day he mentioned a man named Elias Hausheer, whom he had met in a cafe. That man, he said, possessed wonderful ability; but, from a few words dropped by my friend, I gathered that his

skill served less to amuse the public than to correct the chances of fortune at cards.

It mattered little to me whether he was a conjurer or a cheat. He was very clever, and that was enough for me. Besides, in either case, I hoped to extract useful information. I thanked my old friend for his intelligence, and at about ten o'clock next morning I made up my mind to visit M. Hausheer.

As I was about to start a thought delayed me.

I was then known only as a mechanic, and I feared that title would not be sufficient introduction.

I had an idea. Recently I had made a mechanical bird that sang and flew from a snuffbox. I thought it—which, indeed, was very valuable—would speak in my favor. I took it with me.

More confident now in the success of my attempt, I walked toward Golden Crown Street, where dwelt the important personage in question. I do not use the words "important personage" in an ironical sense, because in my passion for conjuring of all kinds, which amounted to monomania, my fancy represented M. Hausheer as possessing a fortune and personal advantages in proportion to his great ability.

I did not know Golden Crown Street, and was surprised on reaching it with its miserable appearance; but without dwelling on this first deception of my hopes, I advanced to No. 8. A narrow, dirty, damp alley led to the house, to which I boldly advanced.

"M. Hausheer?" I inquired, striking one of the smoky panels of a sort of glass box, above which was written the word "Porter."

A man with a gray beard opened a little window;

he held a shoemaker's apron in one hand and a shoe in the other.

"What do you want?" he inquired, with a strong German accent.

"M. Hausheer," I replied.

"Don't know him; only Germans live in my house," he replied, gruffly.

"But," I replied, "I think the name I mentioned is German; look at that," and I presented him the name and address which my old friend had written on a card.

The artist in shoes put on his glasses, and after reading the name said:

"Ah, M. Hhhaoushheer," trebling the aspiration of the *h* in order to give me a lesson in German pronunciation. "Well, well, the third floor."

Thus instructed, I soon reached the third floor, and on arriving at a very gloomy passage I knocked at a door behind which I heard a great noise.

A woman whose age was doubtful, by reason of her untidy and old-fashioned dress, opened the door as little as possible.

"M. Hhhaoushheer?"I inquired, remembering the lesson of the man with the leather apron.

"Go right to the door, there," she said, indicating one at the end of her room.

In spite of the horrible odor which appeared to strike me full in the face, and the unpleasant picture before my eyes, I entered quickly, decided to pursue my adventure, which was turning out singularly picturesque.

Six children, half-dressed and more than half-dirty, rolled about the room in violent and noisy play. The place, besides, was all their own, there being no furniture in the apartment.

I stepped over one, placed another on one side,

and, after opening the door, I found myself in a bedroom. I will not attempt a description; the reader may imagine, after what he has already read, that this retreat was not that of a fashionable exquisite.

There was no one there to receive me.

I ventured to pronounce the name of the conjurer I had come to visit.

Two curtains of an alcove, once upon a time white, were quickly opened, and in the middle of the opening appeared a thin, bony face in a night-cap yellow by long use.

"What do you want, young man?" inquired this fantastic personage.

"M. Hausheer," I replied, a little astonished.

"That is my name."

And my interlocutor looked at me with an air which appeared to say: After?

My illusions, so lofty and poetical a quarter of an hour ago, were now, you may believe, entirely dissipated. The man inspired me with absolute disgust. I wished to go at once, but could I do so? It was necessary to say something to cover my retreat.

"Sir," I said, "Father Roujol informed me of your ability in the conjuring art. I was so interested in what he said that I have called to talk with you about an art for which I have a passionate love; but pray don't derange yourself; I will call another time."

"No, no, wait an instant. I understand. You want to take lessons."

I answered nothing, for fear of entering a path to which I saw no issue.

Hausheer took my silence as consent, and, seduced by the prospect of an asssured payment, he

jumped out of bed without ceremony, dressed in old calico drawers and a flannel waistcoat, and, without giving himself the trouble of donning other clothing, approached me.

"Let us see, young man, what you can do?" said he, presenting me a pack of cards.

Far from accepting this invitation, I repeated my desire to shorten my visit.

But my hungry teacher did not intend to lose me so easily. I had come for a lesson, and he determined to give it me, and would admit of no reason for my not taking it.

I persisted, however, in my purpose of a rapid flight.

Hausheer judged without doubt that it was necessary to seduce me, because he exhibited before me, as a specimen of his skill, a series of card tricks of a finesse truly wonderful.

During this display my apprehensions and disgust were, I confess, completely dispelled; admiration swallowed up all other feelings. I now desired to stay, and would at any price have explanations of his art.

It was now my turn to seduce my seducer.

I took the famous snuffbox from my pocket, and, presenting it to Hausheer, pressed the little spring. My little automaton left the box, sang, jumped, spread its wings, and, that being accomplished, disappeared as if by enchantment.

While the bird sang my attention was concentrated on it, but when it had finished I looked at Hausheer to judge the effect I had produced. I was struck by the expression of greed shining in his eyes. It appeared to me that he looked furtively around as if meditating an attack. His face was

very pale, and his hands, which he advanced toward me, trembled with feverish excitement.

"What do you think of it?" I inquired.

Hausheer appeared to be more and more preoccupied; instead of answering he went toward a drawer, opened it rapidly, took something out and hid it in the breast of his flannel jacket.

"It is very pretty," he said at last, returning close to my side, "but, young man, you must leave it in my hands, and I will sell it for you to one of my friends."

"It is not for sale," I replied; "it was made to order, and I must deliver it to-day."

"That does not matter; I must show it to my friend, and you can have it after."

I did not answer, but I wrapped the snuffbox up and was about to put it in my pocket, when Hausheer advanced toward me, his eyes on fire.

I confess I was frightened; and my fear increased when, after having almost driven me to a corner of the room, my aggressor said in a voice I shall never forget:

"Do you understand, you must give it me?"

He at the same time put his right hand in his flannel vest, and I saw it close on what I thought the handle of a dagger.

The instinct of self-preservation restored me all my energy; the danger was imminent. I prepared for a desperate defense.

I placed the snuffbox in my pocket to free my hands, and I looked fixedly at Hausheer to read his least intentions.

He appeared to hesitate an instant and reflect; then, either because my countenance and coolness impressed him, or that he knew it would be impossible to conceal a crime committed there, or

that he thought he would try persuasion before resorting to violent measures, his face changed suddenly, his violet lips contracted as if to form a smile, while his face made an effort to return to an expression of calm and benignity.

"Well, well," he said, striking me familiarly on the shoulder, "why will you not even lend me the snuffbox?"

"Devil of a man," I replied, with all the calm my recent emotions permitted, "you are so excitable that you don't give time for explanations."

Hausheer treated me to some bad jokes, that I hardly heard through my preoccupation of mind. I feared his return to violence, and to save myself I searched for a plan of escape, and had the happiness of finding one.

"Look here," said I, with an appearance of good temper, "you say you are sure you could sell my little box?"

"I am positive of it; it is perfectly certain, because my friend is very rich," replied Hausheer.

"Oh, indeed," I said; "well, if your friend is really very rich, you can do me a great service, my dear sir."

"What?"

"I possess another snuffbox, like the one you have seen as to its mechanical points, but it is made of gold, and its high price prevents my selling it. I should be delighted if your friend would buy it."

How true is the saying that the best means of being deceived is to believe that you are more cunning than others. The cunning cheat did not perceive my trap; he walked into it.

"Yes, I can do it. He will buy it, I am certain of it. Come along; I will go with you for it."

"Very well," I replied; "dress yourself. I will

wait for you, unless you perfer coming with me dressed as you are."

I accompanied this pleasantry with a forced laugh which produced no echo. Hausheer only offered me a chair and dressed himself before me. During that time I completed the plot of my little revenge.

We soon started.

Golden Crown Street was situated behind the Hotel de Ville. I lived very near in the Street Vendome in the Fields. We were quickly there; both of us desired to hasten the time of our arrival. I knocked at my door; it was opened. I passed in first, and, holding the door slightly ajar, I turned to my companion, and said in a calm and ironical tone:

"M. Hausheer, I have business here, and expect to be detained some time. I beg you will not wait for me."

"And the snuffbox and the little bird?" said my German friend, red with rage.

"That shall amuse you on some other occasion," I replied, putting as much meaning and malignity as possible into my accent, and then shut the door close to his nose.

Listening at the door, I heard Hausheer offer up a frightful series of imprecations and oaths, in the middle of which I distinguished the words, "What a fool I've been!"

I cared little for his imprecations; I was at home and had now nothing to fear; so I abandoned the baffled cheat to his anger and regret.

A few months later, in reading the *Law Gazette,* I was surprised at seeing the name of Hausheer figuring in the trial of a band of sharpers of the worst kind.

His words, "What a fool I've been!" returned to my mind. I then understood all its criminal significance. Hausheer, if less a fool, would have taken the snuffbox by any means.

That thought sent a cold shiver down my spine.

This experience made me more prudent for the future, but did not stop my researches; only, instead of pursuing myself dangerous inquiries in dangerous places, I employed a third person.

In fact, I had a kind of courtier of trickeries. I made the acquaintance of a young man whose life, although tolerably respectable, was passed in eating houses and gambling places, and he undertook to supply me with the information I so dearly coveted.

At these words I fancy I hear the reader exclaim, "Why attack so high a price to such unprincipled tricks? Is it not the conduct of a fool, or at the least of a monomaniac?"

Yes, you have said the right word; yes, I was a monomaniac; but I must say that my madness had a purpose which I felt convinced would be useful one day.

The end that I proposed to myself of reaching some time, and which thousands of circumstances have always retarded, is (and I think the reader has divined it) the work I now present under the title of:

CARD-SHARPERS: THEIR TRICKS EXPOSED.

CHAPTER I.

THE MODERN GREEKS.

After having written the title of this chapter, it is, I think, as well to explain to the reader why the compatriots of Homer and Plato enjoy so compromising a reputation, and by what circumstances the word Greek has become the synonym of sharper and rascal.

Towards the end of the reign of Louis XIV. a certain chevalier of Greek origin, named Apoulos, was admitted to the Court. He quickly made so much money at play that his success awakened suspicion as to the cause of such great good fortune.

Notwithstanding his astonishing ability, the gentleman was caught in the act and condemned for twenty years to the galleys.

This adventure made a great deal of noise, and the name of Apoulos, or simply that of Greek, was bestowed upon those who by trickery endeavored to adjust for their benefit the chance of fortune.

A word more in the French language is generally of no importance from a moral point of view, yet, nevertheless, I think it is due to the addition of that word that we owe a great increase in the number of sharpers at play. Many people who, if they are called cheats and sharpers, would hesitate to incur that infamy, have decided to fall into the temptation because the name applied to them was the comparatively lighter epithet, Greek. Proving once more how true it is that

Often names decide things.

But what contributed more powerfully to in-

crease the number of scamps with light fingers was without dispute, the establishment in Paris of two public gaming places under the names of the Hotels de Gevres and de Soissons.

Before that the Greeks had exercised their industry separately; most of them had no method, and the means employed were, with few exceptions, gross and clumsy. In a word, the art of trickery was in its infancy.

The opening of the two before-mentioned hotels created a veritable revolution among the Greeks; the cleverest of them, at last united, agreed together to create new plans and schemes for the purpose of artistically appropriating other persons' property.

They invented, they calculated, they imagined, and from these learned discussions resulted combinations previously unknown.

Lasquenet, pharaon, piquet, quadrille, favorite games of the period, proved gold mines to these astute manipulators of the dupes they made.

The game of roulette itself, which had been introduced into the two hotels for the public security, was not sacred from the combinations of the banded Greeks.

One of these clever gentlemen, a geometrician, invented a roulette where the black cases were arger than the white, the consequences of which was that the ball in its rapid movement had a greater chance of entering in one than the other.

The success of this discovery required an arrangement with the attendants of the hotel; but that was not too difficult, most of them being already cheats.

The number of cheats increased so rapidly in Paris that it seemed likely to terminate in there being no more dupes.

This penury of prey for the eager Greeks was not of long duration, for the latter were perfectly aware that the number of dupes is infinite, and that the supply can never fail if they take the weakness of the human heart into account. The Greeks therefore organized a service of emissaries, and charged them with the duty of drawing in—first, the foreigners just arrived in the capital; second, the winners of lawsuits just terminated; third, players who had gained large sums; fourth, sons of good family who had come into a large fortune; fifth, dissipated clerks, likely to hazard on a card money not their own.

With such assistance the Greeks realized enormous gains; but their conduct became so scandalous that, on the report of the police, Louis XV. ordered the Hotels de Gevres and de Soissons to be closed, and renewed the ancient laws against gaming.

Even this did not disconcert the Greeks; they opened private gambling hells.

The police, soon on their track, made a determined war on them. Perpetual pursuit, imprisonment of the proprietors of the gambling dens, the condemnation of a crowd of sharpers, terrified the dupes, who, although always blind, have much self-love, and at last they feared to enter such establishments.

Thus tracked, the Greeks scattered, flying to the provinces and abroad, to return again to take their pleasures in the capital when the State, in need of money, established Frascati and the rival houses of the Palais Royal. At the door of these establishments they might have placed these words: "*Here we cheat in good faith*," because the sums people lost there, caluculated in advance on the probabilities of the case, produced a considerable

tax for the State and an immense benefit to the farmer of taxes.

But the Gorvernment firmly closed its eyes to all abuses, until the public indignation made it reluctantly comprehend that it was no longer possible to organize and legalize frauds.

Roulette, and other games that follow in its train, were once more forbidden, and with them parted, or at least seemed to part, the band of pickpockets for whom such play was a rallying point.

We said that the band appeared to part, because, although roulette had been banished from France, the Greeks had not, unhappily, ceased to remain there.

But where could they be found?

The dupes they had made knew very well. They had been taught at their own expense that these insatiable birds of prey are to be found at every place where money is placed on a green tablecloth.

"But," you will ask, "how are they recognized?"

There, indeed, is the difficulty, because these heroes of the Court of Assizes have become cleverer than ever. Forced to enter into society, they have felt the necessity of perfecting still further their guilty industy in order to escape the severe punishment the law reserves for them.

Still, in spite of the difficulty of recognizing them, we will endeavor to point them out to honest people, if not by their particular features, at least by some characteristic traits, and especially by the revelation of the tricks they habitually practice.

Taken collectively, the Greeks do not present any marked type; it would be difficult to portray their facial appearance, because the species is so numerous and varied. I, however, think it necessary

in order to better describe them to divide the Greeks into three categories:

1st. The Greek of the Fashionable World.
2nd. The Greek of the Middle Classes.
3rd. The Greek of the Gambling Hell.

To all lords, all honor; therefore we will commence by the first class.

CHAPTER II.

THE GREEK OF THE FASHIONABLE WORLD.

The Greek of the fashionable world is without dispute the subtlest, the most adroit, and the cleverest of his talented species; in short, he is a great master in the art of making dupes.

The Greek of this order is generally a man accustomed to good company, whose deportment and manners are all that can be desired; and if he does not dazzle by the brilliance of his conversation, it is only because he does not desire to eclipse any one else, and also that he reserves himself for his professional avocations.

The Athenian gentleman dispenses easily with showy and agreeable qualities; he does not value them. But on the other hand he values infinitely the qualities that assist him in his profession. Thus, for example, whether he owes it to nature or to study, he possesses in the highest degree that delicate and prompt perception, that exquisite tact, and especially that marvelous appreciation of which I have spoken in my work, "Confessions of a Conjurer."

When he is skilfully dealing with a dupe at play, although he appears to be only intent on his own cards, you can see him direct a veiled and furtive glance around which takes in and appreciates everything which occurs around him. He knows, from the impression produced by the examination of the cards, as well as by the arrangement of them, how to form an opinion of the play of each of his adversaries.

As physiognomist the Greek of the fashionable world could give instruction to Lavator himself. It is in vain that any one attempts to cover his feelings and thoughts by a veil of cold impassibility; at the least movement of the facial nerves, at the slightest possible contraction of the features, he will discover the most secret emotion of the soul.

These delicate appreciations, so useful for his perfidious plots, serve him equally well to weigh the degree of confidence he inspires.

The Greek of the fashionable world plays every game with equal perfection. The theories and possibilities of the game of hazard, so cleverly described by Van Tenac, are only for him elementary principles that he elaborates with a rare intelligence.

To these eminent qualities of the mind, the Greek of the fashionable world unites a profound knowledge of the most difficult tricks of conjuring. Thus no one knows better than he how to draw the card or break the cut, to use or place aside concealed cards, etc., these three important principles of deception he has raised to astonishing heights of perfection.

Favored by excellent sight, he can, after the cards have been played before him several times, recognize and distinguish several of them. One because it is to a very slight extent deeper-colored than the others; another because it has a little mark or stain that the most careful maker cannot avoid; and he profits by such knowledge to increase his chance of winning.

If such marks are not perceptible, the Greek through the extreme delicacy of his touch knows, when they are in his hand, how to recognize as he plays them, several cards that he has already marked with a slight scratch. This enables him to

either keep or pass them to his adversaries, according to his interest in the game.

The Greek of the fashionable world leaves the capital during the summer for the purpose of taking the waters. In that case he cheerfully proceeds to that celebrated and brilliant oasis called Baden-Baden. It is there that, thanks to the blindness when they are in his hand, how to recognize as he makes enormous gains, by the aid of which he leads the luxurious existence of a nabob.

The majority of the sharpers end miserably; some return to private life and drag on an existence of remorse and fear, such as that so cleverly described by a witty writer in his "Fortune Mysterious."

CHAPTER III.

THE GREEK OF THE MIDDLE CLASS.

The Greek of the middle class, also termed the wandering Greek, because he is almost ubiquitous, is the link between the Greek of the fashionable world and the cheat of the gambling hell. This is an important feature, because he, to a great extent, melts almost imperceptibly into the two extremes of the world of robbers.

The wandering Greeks rarely travel alone, they are assisted by companions called *Comtois.* These are, as a rule, other Greeks whose talent, fortune, and respectability are as great as their partners'. Now and again, according to circumstances, the honorable workers change their parts, and take, turn about, the position of *Comtois.*

These gentlemen have, besides the *Comtois,* lady helps named Amazons, of whom they make the most dangerous and effective use. These are their companions, their close associates in good and evil.

These creatures, who are usually very pretty, possess a perversity at least equal to that of their lords and masters.

In the ambushes prepared for the young fellow of good family, and to foreigners under the title of receptions, the Amazons play the part of decoys.

The cunning witcheries of these women are incapable of analysis and cannot be described here. Let it suffice to say that, like the innocent larks that the bird-catcher attracts and blinds by the glittering of a glass, the imprudent visitors, once fascinated by these sirens, become an easy prey, and

allow themselves to be plucked by the Greeks, male and female.

The wandering Greek is a long way from the possession of the brilliancy and good breeding of his brother of the fashionable world; he does not possess like him that fine tact, that delicacy of execution, which renders the former's trickery almost imperceptible. But in spite of that, he is master of great ability in the conception of his plans, and also in the manipulation of the various instruments used by the sharper.

Cards, dice and dominoes are in his hands very dangerous things.

All games, whether simple or difficult, enable him to exercise his deadly address; whether it be whist, or bataille, or trictrac, he possesses cunning tricks enough to turn the luck to his own side.

The dupes of the Greek are as numerous as they are various, he finds them in every one everywhere. There is nothing sacred for him; his nearest relations, his friends, even his most intimate, are occasionally his first victims.

The following is an instance which shows the perfidy of this class of sharper.

Three Greeks, united together for the purpose of carrying on their business, were all separately in search of pluckable victims.

One of them, a young Italian named Candid, perhaps because of his astute address, came to announce to his confederates that he had discovered a young man of good family, just arrived in the capital.

The young man was rich, a gambler, and prodigal to excess. These virtues were naturally highly appreciated by the three sharpers.

They were also informed by the Italian, that

their intended prey would visit the Opera that night.

Naturally, the society took care not to neglect so good an opportunity. They arranged the plan of attack at once, and, when all the combinations were settled, they separated to meet again at the Academy of Music.

At the hour fixed, the three Greeks found themselves united in the *foyer* of the Opera, and fortune favouring them, it was not long before they were joined by the eagerly expected young capitalist.

The Italian addressed him, and presented his two comrades under false and noble names.

The presentation made, they strolled, they chatted, and the conversation became so interesting that they remained together during the night.

The three Greeks showed a charming amiability.

Their companion, enchanted with his new friends, invited them to sup with him at the "Maison Doree" restaurant.

I need hardly say the proposition was accepted with delight.

The repast was worthy of the rich host, nothing was spared to please such amiable guests.

To prolong the pleasure of this agreeable reunion, play was suggested, and bouillotte having been proposed, it was received with acclamation.

While the tables were being prepared, our three cheats found means of consulting together, and, on the proposition of Candid, they agreed that for the purpose of leading their host on by degrees to gross stakes, they should allow him to win up to three thousand francs, after which they would pluck him to pieces.

Everything was therefore on the side of the Greeks. The young capitalist placed on the table

a pocket-book, which appeared richly filled. He took out a note of five hundred francs; and it was doubtless filled with others.

Fortune, assisted by the three cheats, so favored the provincial that in a little time he found himself winner of a sum which would serve as bait.

"Really, gentlemen," he said, as he placed in his pocket-book the notes just won, "I am so confused by my great good fortune that I will tire it out, so that you may have your revenge. See, I will not stake now less than fifty louis!"

But he had hardly uttered these words when, drawing his handkerchief from his pocket, he carried it hurriedly to his face; he was attacked by bleeding of the nose.

"Pardon, gentlemen," he said, rising. "I will return to you under five minutes, because it is very rare that this infirmity of mine lasts longer." He left the room, leaving his pocket-book on the table.

Candid, animated by compasion for his new friend, followed to render him assistance, or rather, to be perfectly frank, for the purpose of sharing his rapid flight.

The rich provincial was in fact, to speak the whole truth, nothing but a Parisian sharper with whom Candid had united to rob his associates of three thousand francs. The bleeding at the nose was the end of the comedy, the first act of which passed at the *foyer* of the Opera.

Let us now return to the two forsaken Greeks, seeing and hearing what passed.

"Ah, my friend," said one of them to the other, both looking lovingly at the rich pocket-book, "fate favors us beyond our hopes. Admit that we have gained the money of the provincial; we had better take it and go."

"Yes," returned his comrade. "But there's the bill to pay before we can leave."

"Good heavens! that is simple enough! Pay the bill, the pocket-book will return us the advance."

"But suppose we meet the provincial."

"Well! what can he say when we bring him his pocket-book that he left on the table?"

"Good, I understand. He must thank us for our thoughtful kindness. That is a good idea, capital!"

The two scoundrels asked for the bill, fee'd the waiter handsomely, and hastily left the room.

When at the bottom of the staircase, the Greek who held the pocket-book said to his friend:

"Stop a moment. I have an idea again. Go back and tell the waiter that we have gone to the 'Cafe Riche' to continue the game; that will give us time to get out of the way with our little find."

He had no sooner turned his back than his companion took flight with the beloved pocket-book.

Now, which was most robbed of the two robbers?

The pocketbook was filled with useless paper; the good notes gained had been cleverly extracted by the supposed guileless young man from the country.

That incident will give an idea of the character of the individual of which I have given here the type. If the reader desires to possess a deeper knowledge, let him continue to read this work; after the different rascalities that I am going to expose, and in which the wandering Greek plays the principal parts, I think he will be sufficiently edified on the perversity of that description of sharper.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GREEK OF THE GAMBLING HELL.

One might say with truth that the Greek of the third rank is the vulgar parody of the two other types I have already sketched, and that if I were allowed to make a comparison which must, in fact, sin by more than one side, I could add that the Greek of the gambling hell is, compared to those already described, what the whining beggar is to the virtuoso.

Heaven forbid, at the same time, that I should fall into an ecstasy of admiration before the tricks of a scoundrel, whoever he may be! But one may admit, without being taxed with exaggeration, that if the rascalities of a Greek raise a feeling of reprobation, that does not prevent one being greatly astonished at his skill.

For my own part, I state sincerely here that although in all cases I object to be robbed, if such must be my fate I much prefer to be the dupe of a clever Greek than the victim of a low, clumsy rascal.

In regard to distinction and elegance, there is no comparison to be made between the Greek of the gambling hell and those of higher position. There is reason to believe that they do not even suspect the existence of those more brilliant sharpers. The lower type of Greeks are nearly all alike; they are, for the most part, wretches that idleness and debauchery have driven to ask from cheating what they will not attempt to win by honest industry.

Their tricks are usually as coarse as the people to whom they address themselves. It is no longer

the art of the conjurer; it is trickery without a name. Their adversaries are, besides, so easy to take in, that they are not spurred to take greater pains. In addition, it is nearly always after emptying the fifth or sixth bottle between two, that the game commences and the cheating is done.

It is not necessary to say that the qualities essential to the Greek of the low drinking den is the capacity to smoke and boose without being affected by either. A long use of alcohol produces that insensibility.

The low Greek establishes his center of operations in the drinking rooms of the wineseller, in the gambling dens, and in the low drinking houses of the suburbs.

His victims are most often the drunken workman, country fellows visiting Paris, conscripts joining their corps, and occasionally little capitalists on the spree.

It is rare for the low Greek not to be supported by a disciple in the execution of his trickeries. His operations require the help of an accomplice, because they are nearly always robberies in the American fashion. The following is one instance out of a thousand:

The Greek enters a little-frequented public-house, and sits at a table near which a drinker is installed. This is his accomplice, who pretends not to know him.

The newcomer orders a bottle of wine, and while drinking it he talks in so loud a voice to his neighbor that he naturally attracts the attention of the others in the room. He affects the greatest simplicity, and utters an absurdity arranged for the occasion.

His assistant (the *Comtois*) makes a mocking

reply, which arouses the laughter of the audience, who gradually close round the supposed antagonists.

The Greek finishes by being angry at the jokes at his expense made by the other, and asks him to play for the two bottles of wine they have had.

The proposal is accepted, but the Greek plays very badly and soon loses the game. He holds his cards so awkwardly that those in the room believe he is playing for the first time. Of course, his defeat had been anticipated.

His successful adversary, pleased with his victory, leaves the table, and, after strutting about, goes out, his part being performed.

In the meantime the supposed silly countryman converses with the others; he complains of his defeat, and displays a great desire to take his revenge from some one.

The dupes see a chance of an easy victory; every one is greedy to play, and they are soon eagerly at it, winning without difficulty. But the Greek, far from losing heart, takes from his pocket a handful of five-franc pieces, with which he says he will purchase his revenge.

This declaration and the sound of the silver awakens the greed of those present. Every one in the room desires his share of the plunder. They play again and win several games, and this loss, arranged by the Greek, gives him the desired opportunity of increasing his stakes to double or quits.

It is then the Greek enters on serious business, but without abandoning his part of simpleton, and uses all his vulgar tricks. He wins, but with such clumsy action and gross awkwardness that he awakens no suspicions. In the opinion of all fortune has turned, and once more justifies the saying

of the vulgar, "There is a good God for the drunkards."

The Greek, after well filling his purse at the expense of his opponents, has to abandon the game for want of people willing to play with him, and goes to share with his assistant the plunder of the day's performance.

This pretty little game, in the vocabulary of the Greeks, is called *playing the peasant.*

If cheating of this kind was brought before the tribunals, we should only see one person accused, or at most two; but is not it evident to all the world that in these American kind of robberies, and particularly in the one just described, the dupes are as bad in intention as the sharpers who rob them? Would not they also profit by the simplicity of an unfortunate peasant in order to plunder him? The difficulty in the way of their success is that, under the appearance of stupidity, they have met with some one more cunning than themselves.

If I were writing for the frequenters of the "Paul Niquet" or for the consumers of the ardent spirits sold at the "Pere la Rangaine," it would be necessary that the Greek of the kind just sketched should be the hero of this work; but as I firmly believe that the great majority of my readers will never have to defend themselves from the attacks of that lowest type of cheat, I will finish with him by exposing two or three of his best tricks.

We now find our Greek at one of the cheap dining places of the suburbs, where the charge is one shilling a head.

During the meal our friend, who does not want a vulgar joviality, proposes several wagers of an

equivocal kind, which always give him the advantage.

But the object of the sharper is not so much to win the wagers as to excite in his companions a kind of irritation, of which it is shortly his object to take advantage.

While at dessert our man arms himself with three plates, which he uses to make disappear little balls made of bread crumbs.

Far from attempting to show any skill, he is absurdly awkward.

Every one laughed at him because he produced no illusion whatever.

In spite of this our Greek continued with an unblushing assurance.

"Look, gentlemen!" he said. "Please observe that I place this bread ball under this plate. Well, I will cause it to disappear without any one being able to see how."

But while the sharper places the ball under the plate, he knows how, by a rapid and clever trick, to shoot it to the other side of the room, where it falls on the floor.

Pretending to believe that the ball is still under the plate, he tries to explain the beauty of the feat he is about to perform. In giving the explanations he turns his back to the three plates.

At this moment a spectator, who had seen the ball fall, picks it up without being seen by the conjurer, places it ostentatiously in his pocket, and addresses those near him in a whisper:

"Pay the stupid fellow out for once," he said. "Bet him that the ball is no longer under the plate. He is sure to be taken in, because he has not perceived his mistake."

They accepted this advice the more readily be-

cause people are never sorry to deceive the deceiver.

The Greek, far from refusing the wager, fixes a higher stake, and even proposes to bet with every one in the room if they wish it.

Seven or eight accept his offer, and amongst the first are those already taken in by the doubtful wagers which preceded the plate trick. They rub their hands at the prospect of a pretty little vengeance. They are sure of gaining this time, because they know perfectly well that the ball in question is in the hands of one of themselves.

But, astonishing deception, the little bread ball is under the plate!

Mr. Greek has won his bets.

At the same moment that our cheat had shot away one ball of bread he had cleverly introduced another in its place.

The man who proposed the wagers was his accomplice.

Here is another trick of the masters of cheating:

Some years ago, near the Jardin des Plantes, on the Place Bastille, or in some other public resort, people encountered a blackguard on his knees on the pavement, where he deceived the passers-by in the following manner:

He held in his hand three cards, namely, the seven of hearts, the king of spades, and the ace of diamonds.

The last two cards were held in the right hand, the ace above the king; and the other card was held in the left hand, as illustrated on the opposite page.

The cheat, raising the hands a little, made the spectators observe the order of the cards, then, turning them quickly, he cast them successively on the pavement side by side:

The seven of hearts in the place of figure 1.
The king of spades in the place of figure 2.
And the ace in the place of figure 3.
This done, he made the cards change positions rapidly, in order to bewilder the eyes of the spectators.

Then, addressing his audience, he asks them if they can inform him where the king of spades is.
The spectators, after having seen this card fall to the right, and having followed its different evolutions, pointed out a card, and were right.
The Greek appeared annoyed at his failure to take in his audience. He again shifted the cards, and this time offered to bet that no one could find the one indicated.
The public laughed, but refused to bet.
But a spectator, bolder than the others, a sort of countryman, with a simple, honest-looking countenance, spoke to the Greek.
"What you say is very cunning, but I bet you twenty sous that I can find the king of spades."
The wager was accepted by the Greek, who, taking up the card pointed out, confessed that he had lost the wager and paid the countryman.

The two champions bet again and again, and the Greek always lost, until the peasant, apparently satisfied with his good luck, departed.

The public, in its unuttered appreciation, was no more taken in than the countryman; but when the winner had gone, and the Greek still offered to bet on the right card, two or three individuals out of those present, taking the man for a fool to be easily cheated, accepted his offer.

But these poor dupes were ignorant that the peasant was an accomplice, and that the wagers he had won so easily were baits to their cupidity.

With his new opponents the Greek acted very differently; in throwing the cards on the ground he employed a trick which altogether changed their position.

It is true he placed the seven of hearts on the figure 1, but instead of letting fall, as before, the king of spades at figure 2, he dropped cleverly into its place the card above (the ace of diamonds), and then placed the king on figure 3.

This rapid change, too quick to be seen, resulted in this, that after a little manipulation by the Greek the cards indicated by the spectators was the ace of diamonds.

What followed was the usual thing; the losers determined to be revenged, and did not quit the place until their pockets were completely empty.

It sometimes happens that quarrels and fighting follow cheating of the kind described; but when that happens the accomplice, who watches the little game, interposes the strength of his arm and assists the escape of his confederate.

This little trick is now confined to the low public-houses, the police forbidding the exhibition in the streets.

In England the cheats have a similar game called thimblerig.

They place three thimbles on a little table.

Under one is placed a pea; then the operator rapidly changes the position of the thimbles to puzzle the spectators.

As in the previous trick, the Greek engages the audience to bet by the aid of an accomplice.

The reader already knows that this gentleman always wins.

But it is another thing with the public; the gambler never loses, because, in making his changes with the thimbles, he arranges cleverly to place the pea in one thimble, while the spectator believes it is under another.

This requires the art of the conjurer.

The reader will understand, after what we have disclosed, that although the Greek of the gambling hell differs in his tricks from those of his companions in trickery, he yields nothing to them in cunning and rascality.

CHAPTER V.

A GREEK CAUGHT IN THE ACT.

People are often puzzled to account for the fact that, although there are so many Greeks in society, so few of them are ever brought to trial.

That is easily accounted for.

In the first place, the Greek is usually clever, subtle, and cautious. It is very rare, for these reasons, that his tricks are discovered.

Even supposing that he is taken in the act of cheating, if it is a private house, people are content with expelling him ignominiously after compelling him to restore his badly got gains; if it is a public place, then astute rascals always know how to invent some means of evasion or way of sneaking out of the difficulty. The following instance, of which I was witness, is an example:

Thirty years ago there was on the Place Chatelet, on the spot now occupied by the Chamber of Notaries, a large and famous restaurant.

In the center of an immense facade this establishment presented a very pastoral sign—a calf being suckled by its mother. This simple allegory indicated to the least educated stomachs that within they were certain to be well nourished. In fact, at the most numerous public dinners, little and great wedding repasts—in short, at festivities of every kind—the guests were always sure of a perfectly appointed table and splendid rooms to enjoy themselves in.

After that necessary statement, I will begin my story.

During the Carnival of 1832 some persons of my acquaintance had the idea of organizing a subscription ball, and chose for the *fete* the famous rooms of "The Sucking Calf." The subscribers were numerous, and the natural result followed—those present were very mixed. Out of about three hundred persons present perhaps a dozen were known. But as we had excellent stewards, we danced with confidence.

Who says a ball says also a room for gambling. In this case there was near the dancing saloon another large room furnished for the card-players. I was a moderate gambler, because I never placed at the hazard of cards more than a silver piece; after that was gone I retired, if not with pleasure at least with philosophical resignation. On that night I was at open war with fortune. In spite of most elaborate combinations, the inconstant goddess promptly crushed me. The last of my ten pieces of a franc each was melted under the breath of my terrible bad luck.

The lightening of my purse placed me in excellent physical condition for dancing; but in addition to not being much of a dancer, I feared that my partners might read in my eyes some trace of the bad temper resulting from my loss at play, because, I must confess, ten francs at that time held an important place in my purse. But who can expect to be a millionaire at twenty-five?

Therefore, instead of dancing, I walked to a table near, in the evil hope of consoling myself for my bad fortune by seeing the ill-luck of some one else. We are all ill-natured when annoyed.

The game was animated; gold glittered on the green cloth, and all eyes, fascinated by the precious metal, appeared to gloat on the anticipated pleasure of winning.

They played ecarte.

The players at the side of the table at which I stood were in bad luck; four games were won in succession by their opponents.

I finished by believing that the bad luck with which I was penetrated was scattered on those by whose side I stood; so, in my strict impartiality, I resolved to take my evil influence to the winning side. The hand was held there by a man of about forty, whose face, ornamented by a thick, fair moustache, seemed to breathe frankness and honor. He wore a blue coat buttoned to his cravat, which gave him a military appearance, and his easy manners, his grace and good style gave on the opinion that he was a man used to the best company.

This lucky player never failed, after each deal, while distributing the cards, to recall the reason of his good fortune, as if he would account for his success.

"If, unhappily for me," he said to his adversary, "you had played diamonds instead of spades, I should have been forced to cut, and you would have won."

This speech made me open my eyes. I was perfectly aware that one of the means used by Greeks to turn attention from their present manipulations was to call attention to what had occurred before. Besides, it appeared to me that I had seen him use a particular movement not unknown to my experience.

I must avow that it took some time to induce me to believe that I was deceived in my conjectures, the play being carried on with such perfect regularity. In spite of that I did not allow anything to escape a careful analysis.

This tenacity of observation had, in time, the

success it merited. A false movement, doubtless, started me on the right road, and I soon acquired the certainty that the lucky player was a Greek of the finest breed.

I must here confess that, being master of the secret maneuvers of the Greeks, I take extreme pleasure in seeing them in execution. Under the hollow pretext of well establishing my facts, I arranged with my conscience and thoroughly enjoyed the exhibition of skill and finesse.

One must have seen to credit how my Greek by exquisite skill, while collecting the cards, chose those that he thought likely to be favorable to him, then classed them together as he shuffled them in the apparently most ordinary way, and at last neutralized the adverse effect of others, under the eyes of the deeply interested spectators.

Poor dupes, how deeply I pitied them!

I returned, however, to more honorable sentiments, and, trampling on my admiration of his address, I decided to stop the little game of my too clever Greek.

I went, in consequence, to acquaint one of our stewards, named Brissard, with whose intelligence and energy I was well acquainted, with the facts of the case.

Brissard followed me, while the individual I pointed out to him rose from the table (a Greek cannot always gain; that would be too imprudent), and at the moment he left his seat my friend approached him.

"Sir," said he, without any ceremony, "I am one of the stewards of this *fete;* as I have not the honor of your acquaintance, I desire to know under whose introduction you entered here?"

"With great pleasure, sir," replied the Greek,

with a smile full of grace and confidence. "I was introduced by my friend M——" (he mentioned a name known to us both) "to one of your acquaintances. Now, sir, if you will accompany me, we will go in search of my friend, who will indorse what I have said. Stop, I think I see him over there."

Before such an answer, Brissard, believing I had made a mistake, was on the point of offering his excuses; but, on a sign from me, he decided to follow the Greek. He walked in front of us and appeared to search with great eagerness . We had much trouble to follow him in the midst of the crowd.

All at once the blue coat disappeared as if by magic. Our efforts to find our lost Greek were fruitless.

At last we learned that our gentleman, in passing near a door, had seized the opportunity of escape.

"I have an idea," said Brissard to me, in running towards the vestibule. "I will catch him yet. He was without a hat; he has not had time to get it. The address of the hatter will furnish a clue to the police."

"Madame," said he to the lady in her office near the place of exit, "have you seen a gentleman with large, fair moustaches come here for his hat?"

"No, sir."

"That is all right. Kindly take great care of an unclaimed hat."

Then he went to the porter.

"Tell me," he said; "have you seen any one pass your lodge?"

"Yes, sir; a man with large moustaches."

"Well, was he bareheaded?"

"Yes, but at a few steps from the lodge he drew

an opera hat from between his coat and waistcoat, and, coolly opening it, placed it on his head.''

''The rascal had taken his precautions. We have been cheated.''

If I had often frequented such reunions as that described, I should have acquired greater ability in the chase of sharpers; but at that period graver affairs occupied my time and diverted my mind from all such pleasures. In addition, it would have been repugnant to me to fill, even for my amusement, functions which, although very useful, are not less unworthy of a person of any pretension to delicacy of feeling.

I have told the story of the Greek and the hat because it serves as an introduction to a series of facts connected with card-sharpers and their tricks.

I will continue my story, at a period twenty years later.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GAMBLER RAYMOND AND HIS INFALLIBLE SYSTEM.

In 1852, after a long series of successful performances in Germany, I stopped at that charming place, Spa, for the double purpose of business and repose.

I stayed at an hotel the name of which escapes me. This forgetfulness is very ungrateful on my part, as I found there the most careful attention to my wants, with an excellent table, and you do not find these agreeable accompaniments of travel everywhere.

Our repasts were usually very gay. That was due to the fact that those present were people of good position and in excellent health, who took the waters simply for amusement.

My neighbor at table was an old patron of the house, and had been staying there for some months.

He was an elderly man with a long white beard, so full that it nearly covered his face. All one could see were two cheeks so brightly colored that a coquette would have envied them; they were like two rosy apples laid upon snow.

M. Raymond, the name of the gentleman in question, was the most genial, amusing, and amiable companion I ever encountered. He possessed that rare art which consists in keeping up a pleasant conversation by making others talk; that is to say, that unless he had an interesting story to tell, which rarely happened, he managed, by brilliant ability, to make every one at the table add to the pleasure of the meal. He was, in a word, the life and soul of our dinner party.

M. Raymond, to whom we gave the name of friend Raymond, or simply that of our friend, appeared to be in easy circumstances. No one knew his exact income, but we supposed him to be well off, because he was a constant player at roulette, and to be a constant player at that game one must be rich. Roulette is not generous, that is its least fault.

At the waters the passion for play is not a vice; it is a distraction, quite in fashion. Thus my amiable neighbor, notwithstanding his constant visits to the green table, enjoyed the general respect.

M. Raymond attended several of my performances, and appeared to thoroughly enjoy them. He had talked with me several times on the subject of my art, and had displayed a profound knowledge of conjuring in general, and particularly of card tricks. When we were alone he would draw the cards and execute with ease very difficult tricks in a manner to make me regard him as one of the most distinguished amateurs I had ever met.

This sympathy in taste—I may say passion—contributed to increase our intimacy, and few days passed on which we did not take our walks round the town in company. Our talk, naturally, very often recurred to the same subject. We also often conversed about roulette and trente-et-quarante. But on that subject we rarely agreed, and my friend became angry when I told him that I held gambling in horror, and that when I approached the green table it appeared to me that I assisted at a reunion of fools, or, at all events, maniacs of the worst kind.

"Fools, maniacs!" exclaimed M. Raymond. "But are you ignorant of all the study, of the force

of mind and genius that are necessary to combat bad fortune? Are you not aware that the art of controlling chance is not a dream, and that the prerogative of intellect is to know how to appreciate the value of probabilities?''

One day, as a sequel to one of these discussions, a little livelier than usual, M. Raymond, feeling without doubt the feebleness of his arguments in favor of play, allowed himself to impart to my ear the most interesting confidences.

''Ah! you say that you regard gambling with horror, and that you never play. Well, listen to me. I could make you in one hour as passionately fond of play as I am; in fact, I should be compelled to restrain and guide you.''

I made a gesture of contradiction.

''Favor me with your attention,'' he added; ''the only thing I will ask you to do is to promise not to reveal what I am about to impart.

''You doubtless share the general opinion that M. Raymond is possessed of independent means. I am rich, in truth, because I draw my income from a source practically inexhaustible. At the same time I confess that I possess no other fortune than that derived from my wits. In other words, I live upon the money I am able to derive from clever combinations at roulette. I can give you evidence that there is not a year that I do not derive from that capricious game at least twenty thousand pounds. I will now show you how.

''For a long time people have laughed at intelligent players who, not confiding in uncertain fortune, have tried to direct her in their favor by more or less ingenious combinations.

''If they are deceived by the result, is it there-

fore necessary to conclude that it cannot be accomplished?

"I have good reasons to be of the contrary opinion, and I hope that when you have heard why you will agree with me.

"To assist you in understanding my explanations I will at first establish this aphorism:

"*All games of chance present two distinct features, viz., those which concern the person interested (that is to say, the player), and those that are inherent to the combinations of the game.*

"The chances of the player are represented by two mysterious agents, known by the names of luck and ill-luck.

"The chances of the game may be called probabilities.

"Probability is the relation which exists between the number of causes favorable to an event and the total number of possible causes.

"Some learned people have written very fine things on probabilities; but just because of their multiplicity and depth these calculations are of no practical utility to the player.

"Besides, all these systems of probabilities may be with advantage replaced by the following theory:

"*If chance may bring to the game every possible combination, there are, nevertheless, certain limits before which it appears to stop.*

"For example, such would be the case if a certain number appeared ten times in succession at roulette.

"That could occur, but it never has.

"One may conclude that in a game of chance:

"*The more times a certain combination is repro-*

duced, the nearer one approaches to the certainty that it will not occur again.

"That is the most elementary theory of probabilities, and is named the *ripeness of chances.*

"After what has preceded," added M. Raymond, "you comprehend that to win a player must not only begin with a vein of good luck, but, in addition, he should not risk his money except at the time indicated by the rule of the maturity of chances.

"I have made my necessary introduction as short as possible."

At this moment M. Raymond, doubtless to give my attention a necessary interval, stopped, slowly drew his handkerchief from his pocket, used it several times, then, thinking me sufficiently rested, continued as follows:

"My theory is contained in the following precepts, entitled:

"ADVICE TO PLAYERS.

"1st.—Choose of preference the game of roulette, because it presents several ways of staking money,* which permits the player to study the several kinds of maturity.

*Odd, even, miss, red, black, and the thirty-eight numbers of the ball, and, in addition, the different combinations of the game.

"2nd.—A player should present himself before the green cloth coolly and calmly, like a business man engaged in a negotiation. If passion intervenes, farewell prudence and luck, because is there a position which gives greater opportunity to bad fortune than that of an excited gambler? The simplest rules of equilibrium prove it. In fact, if we admit that the passion for play procures ineffable joys, as all happiness on earth is balanced by proportionate suffering, it is nearly certain that the

anticipated pleasure of possession will be equalized by bitter disappointment.

"*Every one who enjoys gambling runs the risk of losing.*

"3rd.—The prudent player, before beginning to gamble, should satisfy himself by proofs and observations in what vein he is at the time. *If he has any doubt on the subject, he should refrain.*

"4th.—There are people who are always pursued by bad luck. To such persons I say: *Never play.*

"5th.—An experienced player should invariably avoid joining his chance to unlucky players who always lose. Nothing is so catching as bad luck. Be careful not to approach such plague-stricken persons.

"By the opposite reason, associate yourself with those who are in luck.

"6th.—Always place yourself at play last; you thus avoid the bad influence of late comers.

"7th.—Choose, for playing, the moment when players are numerous; the games are then more rapid, and you have a better opportunity of studying the play.

"8th.—Never begin to play when the mind is troubled. Occupy yourself solely with the voice of the *croupier* and of your own play; isolate yourself in the midst of a crowd.

"9th.—Never risk a chance until it has arrived at full maturity. This system forces a new player to remain inactive; but with practice one always plays, because one profits by all the chances attached to the combinations of the game.

"10th.—When the established expectations built upon personal luck or probabilities are deceived, quit the game, to recommence at a more favorable time.

"*Obstinacy at play is ruin.*

"11th.—Never prolong a sitting beyond two hours; after that time the mind and luck are tired and require repose.

"12th.—In order to acquire the impenetrable calm of which I have already spoken, bury at the bottom of your heart all the emotions that gain, however considerable, may evoke. Remember that Fortune does not love to see a man rejoice openly at the favors she accords, and that she reserves bitter disappointments for the imprudent who are intoxicated by success."

I gave M. Raymond's explanations a continuous attention. His system appeared to me very ingenious, if not infallible, because it never entered into my mind that any plan could control fortune. I desired, nevertheless, to convince him that I had perfectly comprehended him.

"All your precepts," said I, "are very clear, and may be resumed in this one, that one should, before risking money at play, make a profound study of his own vein of luck, and at the same time of the different probabilities of the game, called maturity of chances."

"That is exactly the same," added M. Raymond. "The system is certain, and I have only just made a most fortunate application of it.

"I felt this morning that I was in a splendid vein of luck rare even in the life of a gambler.

"I was so certain of this that I had instinctively the assurance that something fortunate would occur.

"When I reached the table, I nevertheless made a few simple experiments at *rouge et noir*, and my success confirmed my hopes.

"I was careful not to exhaust my vein; I there-

fore stopped, and, taking a card, I made a serious study of the maturity of chances in order to attempt a big success.

"At the end of an hour's observation, I believed the moment favorable; I placed ten francs all on number thirty-three.

"I lost, as you might expect; but, full of confidence in my vein, basing it on the fact that number thirty-three had not reached its full maturity, I played the same figure four times in succession! On the fifth occasion my theory justified itself; the ball stopped at the happy number.

"My four stakes amounted to eighty francs. That sum being multiplied, according to the rules of the game, thirty-six times, I received two thousand, eighthundred and eighty francs.

"A fool would have gone on with the game; but I, not to tempt with indiscretion my present good fortune, and to thus avoid the cruel equivalent of loss, quitted the table."

In spite of the very intelligent system of M. Raymond, he failed to inspire me with the desire of risking the smallest coin at roulette. I have always regarded gambling as cheating veneered by the bait of an easy gain.

In truth, how many persons have, like M. Raymond, established systems and theories to break the bank, which have only resulted in their own ruin and that of the dupes who believed them!

If there is one gambler who lives by his play,
There are thousands who, famished, see hope fade away.

Some days after this conversation I quitted Spa, on my return to France, and, therefore, as often happens with acquaintances made in travel, I said farewell to M. Raymond, perhaps to see him no more. But Fate ordered otherwise.

Two years later, when I was at Baden, on the Promenade de Lichtenthal, a man whom I had not noticed, placed himself before me in a way which appeared to ask, "Don't you recognize me?"

The man, to judge by his appearance, was certainly not a leader of fashion; the long service of his brown coat was attested by its brilliantly polished appearance: it was tightly buttoned to his throat, doubtless to conceal the want of a waistcoat, and to hide as much as possible of dingy linen. His strongly marked face was ornamented by a large gray moustache very carefully arranged.

"Ah! how a beard more or less can change the countenance of a man!" said a voice that I immediately recognized to be that of friend Raymond.

"That is true," I replied. "But how changed you are!"

The more I looked at M. Raymond the clearer my recollections of him became. His thick moustache, his military appearance, seemed also to attach themselves to a circumstance which had formerly struck me. But I could not recall the fact.

"I do not desire to interrupt your walk any longer," said M. Raymond, doubtless wounded by my hesitation, of the cause of which he was ignorant, and he prepared to go.

I stopped him and said:

"You don't interrupt me; let us walk together; only I should prefer some quieter place, where you can tell me what has happened since our last meeting."

"Ah, good heavens!" sighed poor Raymond, preparing to follow me. "My story is very simple: you shall judge for yourself.

"Fifteen days after your departure I fell into a vein of bad luck without a parallel. According

to my principles, I waited, before commencing to play, for a good opportunity; but my horrible ill-fortune lasted nearly six months. I changed my place of operations to escape it. All was in vain. The most perfect maturities, the safest plans and combinations resolved themselves into ruin and disaster.

"My resources nearly exhausted, I sold successively my jewelry, my linen, my clothes, hoping with their price to save myself from utter ruin. But it was in vain that I used all the prudence of an experienced man, and gave myself up to desperate studies of probabilities; every effort failed, and in a short time I was reduced to terrible poverty

"Since then my existence has been of the most precarious kind one can lead in this world. Too proud to beg, I resigned myself to bear the greatest privations. I am astonished that I did not die of famine.

"You will understand that I dreaded being recognized in my changed circumstances—I, the lucky player, I, the friend Raymond, whose happy talent had been formerly so much admired. I feared to encounter the pity of my former admirers.

"I cut off my beard, type in some degree of my previous good fortune, and, under a new transformation, lived unknown, waiting for a better fate."

In spite of this proud speech of M. Raymond, I thought he would not refuse a little assistance. Nevertheless, fearing to wound his pride, I pressed his hand, and left in it a piece of twenty francs.

"I accept what you offer," he said at once; "but only as a loan; do you understand? Thanks, and good-bye for the present."

With this he left me rather abruptly.

Curious of knowing his purpose, I followed him without his knowledge, and saw him direct his steps towards the throat of all-devouring roulette. I was not at all surprised; all gamblers are alike.

At night Raymond met me again with a triumphant air.

"Well," he said, "people are right when they say that borrowed money brings luck. I am now in a vein of luck. I have played prudently for small stakes. I have won a hundred francs. It is the return of good fortune. Allow me, therefore, with my best thanks, to retain the twenty francs you lent me, because they are a talisman by which I hope to recover myself."

Cruel deception! The next day the talisman and the eighty francs won by it became the prey of the rake of the inexorable croupier.

"Let me have a few more francs," said Raymond, after telling me the bad news, "and I will fight against my bad vein of luck; because I must tell you that I have completely changed my system, and I am now so certain of my new plan that with three hundred francs only I will undertake to break the bank."

I realized by that speech that Raymond had lost his reason, or at all events his judgment.

"You would be much wiser," I said, "to leave Baden and take up a less dangerous occupation. Have you no profession to return to?"

"Alas!" he replied, "the profession I formerly exercised was more dangerous than this one, and I have vowed never to return to it."

This short and simple statement of Raymond seemed all at once to light up the vague recollections that his changed appearance had aroused in my mind.

"Wait a moment," I said, looking at him attentively, "yes, I am right. Were you not twenty years ago present at a ball given at 'The Sucking Calf'?"

"That is true. Well?"

"You may remember having been questioned after some remarkably lucky games at ecarte, and that that was followed by a kind of flight?"

"I particularly recall the circumstance," returned Raymond, in the calmest manner, "because it and other misadventures of a kindred character which had preceded placed me in great danger of exposure, and caused me to visit Germany and to abandon a dangerous career for a life more tranquil and especially more honest. I changed my name, hid my face under a thick beard, and was, as you can bear witness, no longer recognizable."

So full and free a confession inspired me with the hope of obtaining some particulars of a life which could not fail to be very interesting. I trusted to discover useful facts to add value to my history of trickery.

I did not hesitate to make my request, and to provoke his confidence I offered to lend him three hundred francs, to be returned to me when he had made his fortune. It was only indirectly giving them away.

Raymond accepted both propositions, but he asked a delay till next day to enable him to recall his adventures.

CHAPTER VII.

INSTRUCTIVE HISTORY OF A GREEK.

Raymond kept his word and visited me on the following day; and after I had made arrangements to prevent interruption, he began his story.

"My intention," he said, "is not to sell you the history of my life. I will content myself with informing you how I entered on the path of deception, and the fatal causes which induced me to do so. After that I will tell you of some lively incidents in which I have been the hero, the accomplice or the witness.

"My real name and birthplace are of little importance to you; I will conceal both for the credit of one member of my family who occupies at Paris a most honorable position. I shall therefore continue to be M. Raymond.

"When but twenty years of age, sufficiently good looking, and possessor of ten thousand pounds, I led without control, being an orphan, a life as wild as strong passions and the most dissolute company in Paris could make it.

"In two years I had exhausted my property and found myself miserably poor.

"My friends turned their backs on me in the usual way, and, what is quite as usual, it was necessary for me, destitute as I was, to find food and shelter.

"And that is a grand problem to solve for a young man whose only training has been idleness and debauchery.

"I thought of suicide, but repelled the idea.

Was that the result of resignation or cowardice? I do not know; but I decided to live on."

M. Raymond continued with some interesting anecdotes, as he termed them. As faithful historian I will transmit them to the reader; and to avoid a style which suits memoirs better than this story, I will henceforth give my hero the honors of the third person.

Raymond was abandoned by all his friends except one. This faithful companion, named Brissac, was of the same age, and had been sharer of his debauches, and would now share his bad fortune. They had one purse—that is to say, they lived in the same poverty.

Brissac had mental resources which were very valuable to his friends; every day combinations worthy of a better fortune arose in his imagination.

"Ah, Raymond," he said one morning, awakening his comrade, "I have an idea! In a few days we shall be wallowing in gold. The only difficulty is that we want two thousand francs—nothing more than that—and this is what we must do to obtain them: I know, because I have made use of him, an old usurer named Robineau, a man very cunning, very suspicious, and, above all, of a rascality to raise a blush on the cheek of an escaped convict. He must lend us the money. I must admit, in all humility, that my credit is ruined with him; I can ask for nothing; but you, my friend, you can easily ask him for a loan of two thousand francs."

"Without doubt I can ask him," replied Raymond. "Nothing is easier than to ask; but as to obtaining it, that is quite another thing. Such gentlemen as you describe usually ask for security."

"Quite so; that is my opinion. Then offer secur-

ity to this honest Robineau,'' said Brissac, salmly.

''You must be laughing,'' replied Raymond.

''Not at all. I was never more serious. Now listen to me. You propose a promissory note, and in making this suggestion to father Robineau, refer him to your native town for information as to your position. As your ruin is not yet known there, no doubt your man, on the information he will receive, will advance you the sum required. As to payment,'' added Brissac, as if to satisfy his conscience, ''we shall soon find a way of returning him the advance.''

All was arranged as Brissac suggested, by means of a bill of two thousand five hundreds francs at one month, renewable at the sole option of father Robineau, who remitted to Raymond two notes of one thousand francs each.

The two friends, hungry for pleasure, thoroughly enjoyed themselves. At the same time they placed a certain economy in the expenditure of the money which enabled them to prolong their enjoyment for fifteen days. After that their privations returned in full force.

They again addressed father Robineau. He was adamant.

''When you have paid the first bill you will inspire me with confidence, and I may be able to lend you a larger amount.''

The fatal day arrived. The bill was presented and was not paid. Then followed protest, pursuits, judgment. To be brief, father Robineau carried on the war with such vigor that Raymond, to escape prison, was obliged to lead that mysterious life one feature of which consists in the impossibility of enjoying the sunshine out of doors.

To crown his misfortune Brissac, who by means

more or less honest provided for the existence of both, was threatened with the same fate as his friend. A bill drawn on the same Robineau, and accepted by Brissac, was very nearly due; but the latter was not the man to allow himself to be taken. He resolved to free himself by treason and perfidy.

He went to Robineau, told him that he possessed nothing, and that it would be expensive and troublesome to imprison him; but that, on the other hand, his friend Raymond was in a position to pay. He then offered to bring a bill, accepted by Raymond, for one thousand francs in exchange for his own, promising, at the same time, to assist him in seizing his invisible debtor.

His offer was accepted, and Brissac commenced at once the execution of his infamous project.

He makes Raymond believe that he has found another usurer more accommodating than Robineau, who has consented to lend him one thousand francs on a bill signed by him.

Brissac is no sooner possessor of the bill of his friend than he runs to Robineau and exchanges it for his, and returns to Raymond to continue his work.

"All is well; there is only a little form to go through; but our new banker will only hand the money to you. Come with me to satisfy him."

"Yes, but I may be met by a bailiff and arrested," objected Raymond.

"I have provided for that. There is a cab waiting for you with the blinds down; therefore, there is nothing to fear."

Raymond, full of confidence, accompanied his friend; they congratulated each other on their good luck, and laughed at the trick they were playing with the officers, when all at once, at the order

of a strange voice, the vehicle stopped. Then a man, in an authoritative tone, ordered Brissac to descend, and, after taking his place, ordered the driver to go to Clichy.

"Farewell, Raymond. Keep your spirits up. Farewell!" And with these words the traitor Brissac walked away.

Friend Raymond, as he told the above story, could not help clenching his fists.

"I am more angry," said he, "with that infamous fellow, because it was through my imprisonment at Clichy that I entered on a life of guilty perversity."

As is usually the case, the prisoner at first deeply lamented his position; but on reflection he was of opinion that he was not so badly off as he imagined; at least he was sheltered from the terrible poverty which pursued him.

His companions in misfortune were far, besides, from despair. Each one appeared to take his trouble with philosophy. They gave in turn repasts and assemblies, to which ladies residing outside the prison came. Cards were allowed, and, under fictitious stakes, they played for sums very high for insolvent gentlemen.

From the first days of his detention, when every one around him was rather reserved, Raymond associated with a man named Andreas, who showed a friendly interest in his trouble.

This man, although twenty years his senior, became his friend and confidant. Raymond told him of the follies of his youth, of his wildness and misfortunes.

On his part, Andreas imparted his confidences, and from revelation to revelation he came to very compromising disclosures. He professed that he

possessed the art of correcting the caprices of fortune to a degree that, as said Cardinal Mazarin, enabled him *to take all his advantages at play.*

Andreas offered, in addition, to initiate him in these unprincipled maneuvers, and that they should work in common at duping the other prisoners.

Raymond, who had already ceased to be honest, did not feel wounded by this proposal; he accepted the partnership, and worked ardently to conquer the intricacies of his new profession.

His progress was rapid, because students are not much distracted in prison, and therefore have time to pursue any study with advantage.

Our two associates then began a war against the money of their fellow prisoners. They were so fortunate that in less than a year they gained more than sufficient to purchase their liberty.

Father Robineau was one day invited to visit Clichy on important business. He suspected, cunning old usurer, that it was an affair of ransom, and took with him the necessary papers to effect it.

Thanks to the zeal he displayed, the formalities were quickly surmounted, and Raymond found himself again on the Paris pavement, so pleasant to the feet of those of its inhabitants who have not trodden it for nearly a year.

Andreas had also regained his liberty, and the two partners agreed to quit each other no more.

CHAPTER VIII.

ILLEGAL GAMBLING HELLS.

Robbers and Robbed.

Before being an inmate of St. Pelagie, Raymond was completely isolated in the capital. On leaving that prison, he was in a different position. The friends of Andreas became his, and a good number of the houses open to his friend also warmly welcomed Raymond.

These new friends soon treated him like a brother; they were soon familiar enough to honor him with a nickname. And, in consequence of his good appearance and dress, he was called the Marquis. Andreas was honored with the name of Goldenhead, doubtless because of the fertility of his imagination.

It did not take Raymond long to understand that the society he mixed with was composed entirely of people who lived by their wits, and that the houses he frequented, and in which he was so heartily welcomed, were gambling hells to which foolish people were enticed and afterwards victimized. As his friends had recognized in him a certain address in the manipulation of cards, he was charged from time to time with roles in which he acquitted himself with as much ability as presence of mind. At the play table in these houses every one cheated with great talent, and it was not unusual to see at the same table as many cheats as dupes.

Those engaged had agreed on the participation—

that is to say, each Greek had his share of the plunder.

When the play of the night was over, after the withdrawal of the dupes, all that had been won was equally divided.

If wolves do not devour each other, robbers know very well how to rob; that is sure to occur. This society afforded new proof of it.

It often happened that after a game in which one hundred louis had been lost by the dupes, only sixty were to be found when it was a question of dividing.

Each player agreed that there should be more money to divide; but no one confessed that he had stolen the amount deficient.

Search was made for the missing money—they did not profess to be delicate—but nothing could be found.

They had even the idea of empowering Goldenhead to make a strict examination into this abuse of confidence.

Andreas, flattered at being entrusted with so delicate a mission, displayed all the zeal and intelligence of which he was capable, and he did not hesitate to accuse two of his companions, and to point out the tricks they had employed to deceive the society.

One of them gave instructions to his servant, who, near the end of the night's play, came to ask his master for a key or for anything else.

At the same time that he satisfied this demand the Greek gave him a rouleau of the louis won.

If it was a game for high stakes the servant, on a signal from his master, returned the key and received at the same time a second packet of louis.

Another Greek, more modest, had the cleverness

to stick under the table, by help of balls of wax, a certain number of coins; these he would remove at the earliest opportunity.

A third, who must have been a kind of human ostrich, swallowed pieces of gold, that he regained by using a strong emetic.

These double robbers, when discovered, were driven out as unworthy of a society which prided itself on being composed of members *whose honesty was equal to every test.*

It sometimes happened that bad gold coins were found with the good. But the author of this substitution could never be discovered. Besides, they shut their eyes on this breach of faith the more readily, because the coins being so well made, they made no scruple in passing them to the tradespeople.

Andreas in time became tired of employing the resources of his imagination for the profit of persons with intellects so inferior to his own; over and above that, the gambling dens did not present a sufficiently large scope for his exploits. He required a big stage.

In consequence he proposed to Raymond to quit the Lynx Society (that being the name of the honorable association) to form, with the assistance of a man named Chaffard, called the Prevot, a society for the utilization of Parisian and provincial dupes. This association was constituted under the title of the Society of Philosophers. This was to be the employment of each associated philosopher:

Chaffard should travel from time to time to discover birds to pluck. He was also authorized to enter into negotiations with country sharpers, and to arrange with them the conditions under which the

great ability of the masters should be used to successfully complete difficult enterprises.

If Chaffard was not the equal of his two confederates in the manipulation of cards, he yielded to them nothing in regard to cunning and rascality. He possessed besides a quality which on occasion might furnish a good stroke for the benefit of the society. He was a bully of the first rank, always ready to quarrel with his dupes, even while he robbed them, so that many much preferred being cheated to being killed by him. His language in such circumstances was: "All right, sir; there's nothing to be done but cut your throat! I am at your orders," etc., etc.

If it happened that any one ventured to demand explanations of the rascalities of the two others, Chaffard intervened at once, espoused the quarrel of his friend, and always found means of fighting in his place; because neither Andreas nor Raymond was brave, and that was why they thought it prudent to engage the bravo to back them up.

To be brief, Chaffard was the defender, the bulwark of the Association of Philosophers.

The character of Raymond, called the Marquis, was sweet and pacific. His manners were those of the best company. Intelligent and cunning, he readily undertook the exploitation of subscription balls, dinners, and mixed societies. And what is still more astonishing, is that he succeeded later on in getting presented in the *salons* of the higher middle class, where he utilized his opportunities of swindling with as much prudence as ability.

Andreas, called Goldenhead, did not lack a certain distinction. Still the secret gambling hells were the theater of his exploits.

There he not only found easy dupes, but more

than that, thanks to his profound knowledge of trickery and his extreme ability, he succeeded in deceiving the Greeks themselves.

To all his perfidious qualities Andreas joined again a presence of mind equal to every emergency. He was very proud of that quality. In proof of it he once told Raymond the following incident:

At the time he began his dangerous profession, and while his talent was undeveloped, he insinuated himself one day into a secret gambling den open to the most passionate players in Paris.

He was caught in the act of cheating, and certain cards he had endeavored to introduce in the game of lansquenet were found in his possession and convicted him. Already it was a question of delivering him to the hands of justice, when one of the players judiciously said that the reunion in which the offense had occurred not being precisely within legal conditions, there might be unpleasant results arise from the accusation, not to the cheat, but to themselves; besides, there would be the trouble of giving the evidence necessary if they took the case into court.

"Would it not be simpler," he added, "when the offense which merits a severe punishment was committed here that we should satisfy ourselves and justice by throwing the scoundrel out of the window? Once outside, whatever may befall from his rapid transit through the air, he will never attempt to revise our sentence."

Every one agreed with this proposal, and it was agreed unanimously that the sentence should be executed.

Andreas, on seeing the determination in the faces of all present, threw himself upon his knees and implored for mercy. He joined his hands and tried

to arouse the pity of his judges, and added that the floor on which they were assembled was very lofty, there being a ground and first floor below.

All his prayers were in vain. One of the players who had been the greatest loser insisted that no mercy should be extended to the cheat, and he added that he should first be made to restore the cash he had stolen.

This restitution was the easier to carry out, because Andreas, while playing, had constantly kept at his side on the table a purse of green silk in which he had placed the gold of his victims.

"I ask no better terms," exclaimed Andreas, in a broken-hearted voice, while he placed the purse on the table; "but, gentlemen, do not take my life!"

For answer they opened the window.

Four of the most vigorous players were selected by the others to throw the rascal out.

They approached to seize him, when Andreas took an energetic resolution, and, starting before them, jumped clear from the window, and, like a true gymnast, alighted upright in the street.

A little bewildered by the shock, he trembled at first, marched like a man crippled, then, increasing his speed, disappeared, to the stupefaction of the spectators.

This serio-comic execution of the sentence was hailed with mad laughter.

When the amusement of the gamblers was appeased, they thought of dividing the losses sustained during the night.

One of their number was chosen for the purpose of receiving the account of each one's losses, and it was agreed that the money found in the sharper's purse should be given to the poor.

When they opened the purse of the exposed

sharper they found in it only brass counters instead of gold!

Andreas, always even then prepared for a surprise, invariably carried with him two purses, precisely similar in appearance, and, even in his then critical position, had the presence of mind to substitute the false one for the other filled with gold.

When Andreas told this story of the past he hastened to add that he had never been so dangerously pressed since.

CHAPTER IX.

SECRET GAMBLING HELLS.

The three associates at first traveled together and did some good strokes of business in certain gambling dens of the capital. But it was quickly perceived that, as the Greeks increased and multiplied, the dupes became rarer. They therefore formed a clandestine gambling den, at the head of which they placed a very respectable lady of their acquaintance, Madame de Haut Castel, called familiarly the Pompadour.

Chaffard was charged with the duty of finding dupes, and of even dragging them from the other hells.

The establishment appeared to prosper for some time, then one fine day it was perceived that affairs became more and more difficult. Many visitors who had been introduced as dupes, after being well fleeced by the Greeks, entered into business on their own account, and took their revenge on newcomers, and plucked them with great address considering their inexperience.

Andreas soon suspected the good faith of the Prevot (Chaffard), and quickly discovered that that subtle scoundrel, with the assistance of the Pompadour, whose lover he had become, had started a high school of card-sharping, in which for big fees he taught unlucky players how to avert ruin by correcting the uncertainties of fortune.

The other two associates, exasperated at this crime, wished to show their anger, but they feared the sword of Chaffard. They contented themselves

with hiding their resentment and trying to equal the cunning of their false brother.

Raymond and Andreas made up their minds to quit Paris, on the pretext of working the bathing-places during the summer season, leaving the establishment in the capital to the care of Chaffard, with power, if that appeared to him a wise course, to close it.

While traveling the two rascals employed their leisure in organizing tricks of the most perfidious subtlety. They studied especially a certain trick practiced more or less cleverly by Greeks, termed *Service,* and which is nothing but imperceptible (to the uninitiated) signalling.

This was their plan and place of operations:

The two associates directed their steps toward a fashionable bathing town, a place which is generally the point of attraction of players more or less honest.

Raymond, called the Marquis, takes the leading part. He is the first to arrive, stops at the best hotel, and passes for a rich young man of good family. He is careful to avoid being taken for a Russian prince or an Englishman, because both characters have been so used up by the Greeks that they waken suspicion at once. People now know very well the names of Russian princes and those of rich English families; the Greek cannot at present create new titles, or assume those of the two countries in question.

At the *table d'hote* of his hotel, Raymond, by his politeness, the ease and simplicity of his manners, captivated those present.

After the repast he joined his companions in their walks, drives, and other amusements, and at last gambled with them.

If he decided to play it was with much reserve
d moderation. He contented himself with ob-
ving their play; that is to say, he studied the
me of his future victims, and did not touch a
d till the arrival of his accomplice.

The two sharpers met, but they pretended to be
angers; they even affected to have different
nners and tastes.

Andreas approached the gambling tables with a
tain indifference; made bets out of idleness of
ad rather than taste; he refused to take a hand
the pretext that he knew very little of play.

Nevertheless the moment arrived for these gentle-
n to begin business; they are engaged at ecarte.
Raymond held the cards.

In order to inspire confidence he lost at first some
nes, and gave up the hands.

He played again when the play was more ani-
ted and the stakes high.

Andreas is his opponent, but his bets are so
dest that the difference in the gains of the society
st be very slight.

That cunning accomplice stands upright behind
victim, and, facing his associate; the hands
ced behind his back, he appears to take slight in-
est in the game. However, he follows it with
reme attention, and surrenders himself in the in-
est of the society to the delicate work of sig-
ling.

I will attempt, succinctly, to explain this terrible
kery:

Signalling.

Although there are thirty-two cards in the game
piquet, we may define them all as of twelve
erent kinds, viz., eight orders and four suits.

At ecarte the number of orders is reduced again.

with hiding their resentment and trying to eq
the cunning of their false brother.

Raymond and Andreas made up their minds t
quit Paris, on the pretext of working the bathi
places during the summer season, leaving the s
tablishment in the capital to the care of Chaffa
with power, if that appeared to him a wise cou
to close it.

While traveling the two rascals employed th
leisure in organizing tricks of the most perfidi
subtlety. They studied especially a certain t
practiced more or less cleverly by Greeks, ter
Service, and which is nothing but imperceptible
the uninitiated) signalling.

This was their plan and place of operations

The two associates directed their steps towa
fashionable bathing town, a place which is ge
ally the point of attraction of players more or
honest.

Raymond, called the Marquis, takes the lea
part. He is the first to arrive, stops at the
hotel, and passes for a rich young man of g
family. He is careful to avoid being taken f
Russian prince or an Englishman, because
characters have been so used up by the Greeks
they waken suspicion at once. People now k
very well the names of Russian princes and t
of rich English families; the Greek cannot at p
ent create new titles, or assume those of the
countries in question.

At the *table d'hote* of his hotel, Raymond, by
politeness, the ease and simplicity of his man
captivated those present.

After the repast he joined his companion
their walks, drives, and other amusements, an
last gambled with them.

If he decided to play it was with much reserve and moderation. He contented himself with observing their play; that is to say, he studied the game of his future victims, and did not touch a card till the arrival of his accomplice.

The two sharpers met, but they pretended to be strangers; they even affected to have different manners and tastes.

Andreas approached the gambling tables with a certain indifference; made bets out of idleness of mind rather than taste; he refused to take a hand on the pretext that he knew very little of play.

Nevertheless the moment arrived for these gentlemen to begin business; they are engaged at ecarte.

Raymond held the cards.

In order to inspire confidence he lost at first some games, and gave up the hands.

He played again when the play was more animated and the stakes high.

Andreas is his opponent, but his bets are so modest that the difference in the gains of the society must be very slight.

That cunning accomplice stands upright behind his victim, and, facing his associate; the hands placed behind his back, he appears to take slight interest in the game. However, he follows it with extreme attention, and surrenders himself in the interest of the society to the delicate work of signalling.

I will attempt, succinctly, to explain this terrible trickery:

Signalling.

Although there are thirty-two cards in the game of piquet, we may define them all as of twelve different kinds, viz., eight orders and four suits.

At ecarte the number of orders is reduced again.

because players content themselves by noting the numbers.

But to make the signals it is necessary, according to certain authors, to use the pocket handkerchief, cough, sneeze, drum on the table, etc.

One must have a very bad opinion of the ability of Greeks to suppose them capable of such simple tactics. In truth, such noises could not fail to awaken the attention of those present, and to establish the charge of gross cheating.

No, the countryman of Homer does not condescend to such baby tricks, and, unhappily for his victims, the signals he uses are only perceptible to his accomplice.

The reader may judge by the following example:

If the accomplice looks at—

1st. His associate, he designs . . . . . A King.
2nd. The play of his opponent, he designs . . A Queen.
3rd. The stakes, he designs . . . . . A Knave.
4th. The opposite side, he designs . . . . An Ace.

And at the same time that he indicates the value of the cards, he also makes known the suits by the following signals:

1st. The mouth slightly open . . . . . Hearts.
2nd. The mouth closed . . . . . Diamonds.
3rd. The upper lip placed lightly on the lower. . Clubs.
4th. The lower lip placed lightly on the upper. . Spades.

Thus, for instance, should the Greek desire to announce to his acomplice the queen, the knave and the ace of hearts, he directs successively his looks on the play of the opponent, on the stakes, and on the opposite side, always keeping the mouth slightly open.

You may understand now that signalling may be employed at all games where spectators are present. In fact, nothing is easier at piquet than to indicate,

by signals, the color one should avoid, and that which it is necessary to retain.

I have only believed it necessary to give as examples the easiest and simplest signals, and I will add that some Greeks have a great number for the purpose of indicating nearly all things, and, at need, of exchanging advice. The telegraphing is so imperceptible that it is difficult to describe it, and altogether impossible to offer a definition.

The Greek who has the cards cannot always win; and now and then, after a game of four or five deals, he retires from the game, losing, after the indications furnished by his accomplice. He terms that the act of retreat. In that case the accomplice has been careful to double his stake to compensate that voluntary sacrifice.

Andreas and Raymond had, in addition to all I have described, the arsenal of trickeries produced by the study of the most difficult conjuring. In order to render its application more productive, the two Greeks made what they termed double strokes.

Thus, for instance, they found themselves together at the same table at bouillotte, and, as they were supposed to be strangers, they assumed to each other an air of cold indifference which enabled them to exercise with impunity their common rascalities.

Instead of cheating for his own benefit, as one might believe, the one with the cards gave himself the worst, while he gave his accomplice the opportunity of brilliant and successful play.

Frequently, even, by excess of cunning, while giving his confederate a bunch of kings, he gave to one of the two dupes, a run of queens, in order to make the latter bolder in play, which would result in his increasing his stake.

How could the good fortune of these scoundrels

awaken suspicion when they both never appeare
to win at cards?

It was Boulogne-sur-Mer that Andreas an
Raymond had selected for the scene of their rascall
maneuvers. The society there was rich and joy
ous. The harvest was abundant. Still, it was
little reduced by the participation in it of Achill
Chauvignac, a sharper of the place, who indicate
the possibility of business.

Here I am compelled to enter into a short expla
nation.

In hearing people continually talk of enormou
profits, the reader will perhaps think that th
Greeks end by becoming millionaires and transfor
their profits in good investments or in buyin
estates.

That is not the case.

Notwithstanding the great gains, this class neve
conquer the future; one may truly state that of or
hundred Greeks ninety-nine *plus* one die in mi
erable poverty.

I explain the fact thus:

The recruits for the army of Greeks are take
from those whom debauch and prodigality have le
to ruin. Now nothing is less likely to cause peop
to return to the paths of order and economy tha
trickery.

Every Greek is debauched, prodigal, and luxu
rious to the extent of his means.

These gentlemen, far from proportioning the
expenses to their gains, discount the future and li
in an impossible luxury. They keep horses and mi
tresses, and they make a claim on each other's co
sideration based on their extravagance.

The Greek, although it is difficult to credit
loses his own money at play. Yes, this man, wh

is satiated with material enjoyments, has need of the emotions of the gambler; but he must have real play.

He resorts to roulette or to *trente et quarante.* In these games the stakes in the hands of the banker are passive instruments; the Greek finds himself in a chamber of justice. The fortune that he has so often corrected has her revenge in resuming her rights. Her reprisals are severe.

CHAPTER X.

BLEEDING THE DOCTOR.

The traveling of the two sharpers should, on leaving Boulogne, conduct them to the South of France, but they were delayed by an affair proposed by Chauvignac.

It was a question of annexing some notes of a thousand francs from a doctor residing at Saint-Omer, who had a devouring passion for play.

Chauvignac was to give all the information requisite, and, modest man! only asked for one-third of the plunder as a return for his services.

Only, as he was an intimate friend of the doctor, it was agreed that he was to be a sleeping partner in the plot.

The two industrious Greeks did not delay long; a few days after they were to be seen descending at the Hotel d'Angleterre, the best at Saint-Omer.

Andreas played the part of a rich capitalist from Paris, seduced by the beauty of the place and the simplicity of the manners of the inhabitants, desiring to become better acquainted with both.

He was accompanied by a friend who was qualified to advise him in the matter.

They made many excursions, obtained much information; but nothing appeared to quite satisfy the intending purchaser of an estate.

As a result of these pursuits and inquiries the millionaire announced his intention of returning to Paris, and even as he was preparing for his departure was taken suddenly ill.

At his request the best doctor in the town, the

dear friend of Chauvignac, the enthusiastic gambler, was sent for.

The son of Aesculapius, on visiting his new patient, inquired about the causes of his illness and the nature of his symptoms.

"Alas, sir," said Andreas, in a weak, sad voice, "I cannot inform you what has provoked the illness which nails me to my bed to-day; but what I do know is that I suffer horribly in my head. I unfortunately have ground for dreading, from what I feel now, a return of brain fever from which I have suffered before."

"Do not alarm yourself," returned the doctor, soothingly, "we will try to drive away the fever by a copious bleeding."

Andreas submitted even to this severe treatment, and when it was accomplished declared himself better.

"I will return to see you to-morrow," said the doctor, and then took leave of his imaginary invalid.

"Oh, doctor, pray return to-day," implored Andreas, "because I feel the need of your constant attention."

The doctor promised and returned in a few hours. He felt the patient's pulse, and finding it still high ordered his diet and advised absolute repose.

When the doctor had gone Andreas took off a ligature that he had tied on his arm to modify the action of the pulse, took an excellent repast, and patiently awaited the return of his dupe.

Some days passed, during which Raymond appeared never to quit the bedside of his friend; it was a beautiful instance of unselfish devotion. Our Greeks had thought it wise, in such grave circum-

stances, to send for two members of the sick man's family, who were duly presented to the doctor.

These two gentlemen, who were supposed to be nephews of the capitalist, were supernumerary sharpers on hire, who had come from Paris to assist the swindle at the rate of ten francs a day. Their role consisted in seconding the maneuvers of their chief.

The illness did not develop, as you would expect. Andreas was soon in a condition of promising convalescence.

To pass the time for the poor fellow, his two nephews and friend played at cards with him while he lay in bed.

The play becomes animated; gold rolls on the carpet. The family must be very rich!

"Look here, doctor," said Andreas one night. "I believe a little distraction would hasten my convalescence. You have a lucky countenance; do me the favor to hold this hand for me at ecarte. I stake ten louis."

The doctor, as much to please himself as to gratify his patient, eagerly accepted.

He had a splendid hand and won six times in succession, and handed the invalid sixty louis.

"I am delighted," he said, "at having fulfilled the trust reposed in me; but I am ignorant whether the result is to be attributed to my luck or to yours."

"But, my dear doctor," returned Andreas, "it only rests with yourself to prove that point. Play for yourself; I will bet for you, because you will be utilizing your vein of luck."

The doctor required no further urging; he played with wonderful luck, and in a short time had won one hundred louis.

"Decidedly you bring me fortune," said Andreas to his partner. "But that is enough for to-night. I have need of repose. I ask pardon of these gentlemen for retiring after winning; but to-morrow, if you like, we will resume the play, and, thanks to you, I hope we shall further despoil my nephews, to cure them of the passion of gambling. If you succeed in that, doctor, it will not be the least valuable cure you have effected during your practice."

Less actuated by philanthropy than by the attraction of a vein of good luck so happily opened, the doctor did not fail to keep his engagement; he returned the next evening at his accustomed hour. The nephews were in the room.

To finish with his duties as doctor, he felt the patient's pulse, and, finding him in admirable condition, he prepared for play.

The table was prepared, as usual, close to the bed of Andreas, and the game began.

To despoil the more completely the poor doctor, he was permitted to win a few louis. This voluntary loss is called, in the vocabulary of the Greeks, bait, as it permits them to increase the stakes, and thus increases the plunder.

It happened so in this instance, for no sooner were bank notes alone on the table than the vein of luck suddenly changed.

The doctor, until then the beloved of fortune, saw himself the victim of the most crushing bad luck, and, at the termination of the sitting, the loss amounted, on his side, to the sum of thirty thousand francs each.

We need hardly say that there was only one victim, the losses of Andreas, which were only made

to inspire his victim with confidence, being, of course, remitted by his accomplices.

They judged the poor doctor sufficiently bled, considering his modest fortune; besides, they feared that if they charged too much the first act of the tragedy, some legal catastrophe might wreck the climax of the play. Thus, on the next day, the sick man found himself sufficiently recovered to travel, pay his farewell visit to the unfortunate doctor, and quit the town without delay.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PASTE RING.

Some time after the last adventure the two Greeks found themselves at Lyons, resolved to obtain information about the clubs of the town and on the characteristics of the people frequenting them. One of these is pointed out as the resort of passionate gamblers, and, amongst other details that were supplied them of its members, they were informed that a man named Beroli was a great lover of precious stones.

The mania of this man was to make what he called bargains; that is to say, he used his great knowledge of the subject to buy cheaply from persons who had not, as he said, his delicate appreciation.

Such transactions ought perhaps to be termed cheating, if it had not been for many years a settled opinion that such actions are quite legitimate, and that it is quite right, between buyers and sellers, to endeavor to deceive. Do not we meet every day with people who boast of having obtained from a tradesman, by false representations, an article at cost price, while, on the other hand, the seller rubs his hands at having disposed of damaged goods? There are even, I am informed, in certain shops special bonuses given to the salesmen for getting rid of damaged and old-fashioned articles to foolish purchasers.

However that may be, the mania of Beroli inspired Goldenhead with the most perfidious deception.

He engaged Raymond to cajole at the club th amateur of precious stones, while he visited Par to prepare for the execution of a scheme of whic for the present he would divulge nothing.

Fifteen days later, thanks to the able assistan of Raymond, Andreas returned from his journe and was welcomed at the same club so much fr quented by his accomplice.

The two Greeks were not supposed to know eac other; both devoted themselves independently a particular work.

Raymond dealt successfully with some ric landed proprietors, while Andreas contented hir self, every night, with some innocent games a ecarte with his new friend, Beroli.

From the first day of their intercourse Bero remarked a magnificent ring on Andreas' finger

"What a splendid diamond you have there! he said, with an air of envy.

"You think so?" said Andreas, indifferentl and continuing the game; "trump—diamonds. cut a spade worth nothing; you win."

But Beroli did not take his eyes from th precious ring; its brilliancy appeared to fascinat him.

Each day the ring was greeted with new ex clamations, to which his adversary appeared in sensible.

At last one night Beroli would compel his play fellow to depart from his reserve about the ring.

"What did that ring cost you?" he inquired.

"Do you ask that question seriously, my dea sir?" returned Andreas.

"Most seriously, sir," replied Beroli.

"Very well: I will give you an explanation. I I have not before responded to your different ex

clamations, it is only because I thought you were joking. Now that I am assured of the contrary, I am compelled to inform you that you have slight claims to be considered a connoisseur, because the superb diamond that appears to have dazzled you is in reality only paste.''

''What—how? Paste?'' said, with an irritated air, the amateur of precious stones. ''You are laughing at me.''

''On the contrary, I speak most seriously,'' replied Andreas.

''But you astonish me. Let me see the ring more closely,'' said Beroli, taking the hand of Andreas and fixing his eyes on the ring, which he made sparkle by moving Andreas' hand.

''Tell others that story; it will not go down with me,'' he said. ''Your stone is a true diamond; it is I who tell you so.''

''Very well; I have no objection,'' said Andreas, with supreme indifference. ''Come, it is your play.''

And the two players continued their game.

Beroli appeared preoccupied, and constantly regarded the ring.

At the end of some instants he could control himself no longer.

I am so convinced that it is a fine stone that, if you are willing to sell it, I will buy it.''

''I do not intend to sell it,'' replied Andreas.

''Why not?'' inquired Beroli.

''Because, in the first place, I would not rob you; and in the second, it is a family relic that I should not like to part with. I had it from an uncle, who received it from his father. This jewel has been a hundred years in my family under the name of the 'Paste Ring.' I carry it because there is at-

tributed to it a sovereign power against headache, to which I am subject.

"But if you were offered a good price," pleaded Beroli.

"If you offered me four times its value I would not part with it."

"It is not a question of four times," said the ardent amateur, "but rather of a hundred times the value you attach to the stone."

Andreas cut short the pleadings of Beroli by continuing the game.

"Diamonds," he said. "I score again."

The game finished, Beroli, who held to his reputation as an amateur of precious stones, returned to the subject.

"I am so convinced of the truth of my judgment," he said, "that I am always willing to buy it for a diamond."

"Ah! if I were a sharper," replied Goldenhead, "how readily I would let you have my paste ring, to teach you that one should not always depend on his own judgment."

"Look here," said Beroli, "will you lend it me until to-morrow, and I will go, to settle my mind, and show it to a friend of mine, a jeweler?"

Andreas granted his request, gave him the ring with assumed indifference, and they separated.

The amateur rushed at once to his friend's shop and showed him the ring.

The jeweler examined it very critically, and then indorsed his friend's opinion.

"It is a diamond of the first water," he said, "and I should do a good stroke of business if I paid twelve thousand francs for it."

The next day Beroli met Andreas with an air of triumph.

"My dear sir," he said, "I can now avow with rtainty that you and your family are in error, nce a hundred years, as to the value of your ring. he paste in question is a true diamond. I offer ou six thousand francs for it."

Andreas did not reply. They began to play; it during the game the indefatigable Beroli would turn to his one subject, and offered successively gher prices to tempt his adversary. He in time ached the sum of nine thousand francs.

Andreas continued inflexible, and only, as offer cceeded offer, made a negative gesture.

When they were on the point of separating, eroli formed a sudden determination.

"Look here," he said, placing ten bank notes of thousand francs each on the table, "there is my st word. Say 'yes' and let us finish."

"You would absolutely be deceived?"

"Yes, I hold to it," replied the amateur, wagshly, looking at the ring which he still wore on s finger.

"Ah, well, it is yours, since you are so determined to have it. Let me remove the hair of my orthy uncle who has caused me to make ten thound francs; it is concealed behind the stone. I tle counted on this piece of good luck. There is othing like being a connoisseur. There you are; ke your ring, and thanks."

Early the next day the radiant Beroli went to see s friend the jeweler again.

"I am the possessor of the famous diamond," he id, almost before he was in the shop. "There it ; examine it again; is it not beautiful? But I all want more for it when I sell it than the sum ou mentioned."

"You think so," said the jeweler, taking the ring

in order to examine it again. "Eh, but!" he exclaimed, "what is this?? This a diamond? It is only paste!"

The trick was played and won. Andreas, under the pretext of withdrawing the hair of his venerated uncle, had cleverly changed the ring for another identical in appearance, with the exception that the stone was paste.

The night of the exchange sufficed to enable the cheat to escape the indignation of his victim.

"Any one who did not know the intelligence, the dogged obstinacy, and the untiring perseverance of Beroli," said Raymond, in telling me the story, "would have considered that the diamond ring was forever lost."

That was not the case.

After so rude and cruel a deception, our amateur, far from being cast down, felt his mind braced; he vowed to discover his adversary and obtain a just revenge.

In examining the ring Beroli first assured himself that the Government hall-mark was duly made on it.

The ring was therefore in gold; that discovery was a feeble consolation, without doubt; but it led him to believe that the true ring carried the same stamp.

If both rings, he said then, have passed under the eyes of the officer appointed to stamp them, it is impossible to credit, considering the size of the stones, they have not been remarked by him.

This simple reflection was to Beroli the point of departure in his tenacious pursuit of Andreas.

Furnished with a letter of introduction by his friend the jeweler, he goes to Paris, and after that

straight to the Mint, and presents his ring to the manager.

He remembers perfectly the two jewels, and gives Beroli the address of the jeweler who made them.

Beroli then ascertains that Andreas resides at No. 13 Rue Cadet.

Any one but Beroli would have delivered Andreas into the hands of the police; but as the cunning fellow thought little of satisfying justice and much of obtaining his beloved diamond, he thought it more prudent to occupy his mind with that delicate affair.

He visits the concierge of the Rue Cadet, and, giving him a piece of twenty francs, tells him a false story which is designed to win his confidence. He informs him that the daughter of one of his friends, living in the country, has been asked in marriage by M. Andreas, his lodger; that he addresses him for the purpose of obtaining information, reasonably thinking that he could not come to a better source.

The concierge, delighted with the amiable manners, and flattered by the confidence of his questioner, informed him, under the seal of secrecy, that his lodger kept a mistress and passed his nights away.

Beroli was sufficiently informed; he said farewell to the discreet Pipelet, and that same night he placed himself on guard near the door of the wandering Greek.

At ten o'clock Andreas left his lodging and walked towards an isolated house at the top of the Rue Pigale.

Beroli followed and saw him enter the house, shortly followed by about twenty men of all ages.

He concealed himself in the porch of a neighbor-

ing dwelling and made his observations. He noticed that every time the bell was pulled the door was opened by a servant, who carried a torch, and there appeared to be a strict scrutiny made of each visitor before he was allowed to pass.

This reunion of men, the mysterious receptions, the absence of a concierge, etc., all these circumstances combined, induced Beroli to believe it was a clandestine gambling hell. What confirmed this opinion was that although there were four windows, none were lighted, and the house looked uninhabited.

The clever amateur detective made up his mind to have still more convincing evidence; to this end he resolved to remain on the watch until the end of the meeting, and during that time he elaborated a plan of attack with great address.

At four o'clock in the morning the door opened. An individual, after looking round in every direction, left the house and walked towards Beroli.

"Sir," said the latter, rapidly, so as to preclude the possibility of reflection, "has every one left?"

"Why do you ask?" returned the unknown.

"Because the police are near the house and about to surround it. I came with the intention of warning a friend of mine who is within."

"Thanks, M. Friend," said the man, and continued his way very rapidly.

"If that man," thought Beroli, "was only a dupe he would have nothing to dread on leaving the house. His eagerness to escape proves that he fears the police; he must therefore be a sharper."

Strong in this wise conclusion, the amateur of precious stones followed him, and when he slackened his pace, he hastened his and overtook him.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said, "for making

you walk so rapidly. I only wished, by my false intelligence, to prove you were one of us, and I have succeeded.''

''Kindly explain; I do not understand you,'' returned the stranger.

''I think you will comprehend when I inform you that I am a companion of Andreas,'' said Beroli.

''What are you driving at in all this?'' inquired the other.

''To make you an offer,'' said Beroli. ''Would you like to make two thousand francs?''

''Explain yourself.''

''You are acquainted with Andreas?''

''Excuse me, I have not admitted that.''

''You are acquainted with Andreas, and I wish to inform you that he has treated me abominably,'' said Beroli.

''That is very possible,'' said the unknown, in a low tone.

''I intend to revenge myself, and to further that end I require your help.''

''What do you wish done?''

''Nearly nothing. It is only a question of attracting Andreas to a house I will indicate, under the pretext that you will introduce him to a company where there are some dupes easy to cheat; the rest is my affair.''

''It is agreed. When and where?'

''To-morrow—No. 22 Rue Meslay, second floor,'' said Beroli.

Next day, in the morning, Beroli's new ally went in search of Andreas, and made him his treacherous proposal. Andreas, confiding in his new accomplice, accepted the more cheerfully because the business of the Rue Pigale was becoming bad.

On the same night the two Greeks rang the bell at the Rue Meslay. A servant admitted them, and opened the door of a brilliantly lighted room.

Andreas, without the slightest suspicion, entered first, but he was no sooner in the room than his companion, according to his orders, closed the door on him, double locked it and left the house. At the same moment Beroli and two strong fellows presented themselves from a room near.

"You doubtless know me," said the former, in a strong, severe voice, "and fully understand the question we have to discuss?"

"What do you mean, sir?" said Andreas, pretending to be very indignant. "I call upon you, in the first place, to explain the meaning of this ambush. Am I amongst assassins or robbers?"

"Don't take that tone," replied Beroli, or you may have cause to repent it. What you term an ambush is an indulgent attempt at conciliation."

"What do you mean by indulgence?" returned Andreas. "What have you to reproach me with? You offered me ten thousand francs for a ring and I accepted the offer. Did I not hand you the ring?"

"Yes, sir, but you omitted to mention that the stone you gave me was false," replied Beroli.

"Why, good heavens, sir," replied Andreas, with the greatest coolness, "I am far from denying that fact; I informed you of it so many times that you cannot forget it. Besides, did not you say to me, in paying the ten thousand francs, that you knew the stone was false, but in spite of that you had made up your mind to be the possessor?"

"Do not play with words; come to the fact," returned Beroli. "You must restore me the ring you cheated me of."

"To avoid further persistence on your part, sir, allow me to state that I never had any other ring than the one I sold," replied Andreas.

"If that is the case you will not hesitate to copy this note and send it to your mistress," returned Beroli, handing the paper to him.

"I must first examine it," said Andreas, who read as follows:

"22, Rue Meslay.

"My Dear Friend:

"I can make a fine stroke of business here, but have need of my diamond ring for the purpose. Bring it yourself to the above address, confide it to no one else. The bearer of this note will hand you my keys. At eleven o'clock I shall be at the door to meet you. Take a cab so as to be exact.

"Andreas."

"I will never write it," exclaimed Andreas.

"I do not intend to ask you often. Once for all, yes, or no?"

"No, a thousand times, no."

"Baptiste, run to the commissaire of police," said Beroli, addressing one of the two men. "Run, and don't return without him."

"A moment, a moment!" said Andreas; "let us see if some way of accommodation can be arranged. What terms do you offer in order to settle the affair?"

"No compromise; you must copy that letter," said Beroli, firmly.

Thinking, perhaps, that he might escape or evade his enemy when he descended to take the ring from his mistress, or from whatever cause, he seated himself at the table, on which all necessary writing

materials were placed, and under the vigilant inspection of Beroli he exactly copied the note.

Two hours later Andreas was free, and Beroli held in his hand the famous ring. This is what passed:

Andreas' mistress had hastened in a cab to deliver the precious ring; but she had no sooner reached the house indicated in the letter, than a police officer wearing his scarf, accompanied by a subordinate, entered the vehicle, and ordered the driver to go to the Rue Jerusalem, the principal police office.

On the way the officer explained to the lady that having been ordered by the chief of police to surround the house in which Andreas was then detained, as a secret gambling hell, he had arrested the bearer of the letter, and after mastering its contents, had replaced the messenger by one of his men.

"We have apprehended every one in the house, and I am compelled, madam, seeing you are an accomplice, to conduct you to the police office. Allow me also to take possession of the ring, for fear you might mislay it;" and the officer as he spoke removed from the finger of the woman the diamond ring, not without a little resistance.

They soon arrived at the Rue Jerusalem; midnight sounded from the big clock, it was a dark and gloomy night.

"The concierge shall open the door for us," said the officer to his subordinate as they both dismounted, closing the cab door quietly on the mistress of Andreas.

Two minutes had hardly passed after the two men had left the carriage, when a voice was raised in the street.

'You must not draw up before this door,'' it
d to the driver.
'That is true,'' he replied, ''but I have no or-
s. Madam,'' he added, lowering a glass, ''where
ll I drive you?''
'Where shall you drive me? But what? . . .
ive to the Rue Cadet. . . . No, drive to the place
ı brought me from, she said, in a tremblig
ce.
'Go ahead, old girl,'' the man said to his horse,
cking his whip. ''It's our last journey.''
f the reader has not divined it, I will inform
ı or her that the police officer and man were two
ors in the clever comedy invented by Beroli;
t the two performers, instead of addressing
mselves to the concierge of the police office, had,
ing advantage of the darkness of the night, dis-
eared, and in a short time had delivered the
cious ring to the astute amateur of diamonds.

CHAPTER XII.

AN INFAMOUS AMBUSH.

The principal point of operations of the Societ of Philosophers was situated in the Pas-de-Calais because they were often set to work by Achill Chauvignac, who had formerly procured them th little business with the doctor at Saint-Omer.

Chauvignac was extremely ardent in affairs o the kind, which, without placing him in the slight est danger, permitted him to secure large profits i return for his infamous indications.

His most intimate friends were those he pre ferred as victims for the spoiler. He kept them i mind like valuable stock. Each player was entere according to the amount of his fortune, as well a the ease with which he could be plucked.

Thus Mr. B——was worth three thousan francs; Mr. P—— six thousand; Mr. C—— wa not of much value, because he was a poor player still he might realize one thousand francs. Bu the best and richest dupe amongst the arder gamblers was Mr. F——, believed to be pluckabl to the extent of fifteen or even twenty thousan francs.

Andreas and Raymond worked the clubs c Calais and Boulogne, but they dared not risk visi ing Saint-Omer, fearing recognition. They sent i their place two able card-sharpers from Venetia formerly, as they averred, the cradle of trickery

The Society of Philosophers would not have con fided to their two representatives on the proportio of profits due to them, if they had not been und

e sleepless eye of Chauvignac. That astute oundrel, in addition to his own keen observation, d organized a singular system of control.

For example, he addressed one of the two in the llowing terms:

"I have very little confidence in your friend; fear he will deceive the Society; take careful te, therefore, of his gains; for that extra service u shall be paid."

After that he said just the same thing to his mpanion, so that without suspicion each Greek oked after the other.

The harvest reaped at Saint-Omer was very great, t the best part of it entered the pocket of auvignac, whose division of the spoils was not at conscientious, which was really quite to be pected.

It may have been the result of some indiscretion the part of the philosophers, or from some other use; but, at all events, the credit of Chauvignac mmenced to decline in the opinion of his neighrs; people were astonished at the large expendire of a man who possessed nothing; and besides, frequent journeys to Paris without apparent otive, his acquaintance with people of doubtful aracter, all these causes induced respectable pers to be more reserved in their intercourse with n.

Chauvignac was as clever as unprincipled; that a common combination; and the proof is that e sharper is rarely a fool. Chauvignac with his stomary quickness of perception soon realized position, and as the discredit into which he d fallen might be prejudicial to his interests, sought for the means of whitewashing his dingy putation.

Out of the young fools who shared his wild di
sipations he had formed a little band, and amid
them, conspicuous by his elegance and eccentricit
was Olivier de X——.

The family of this scapegrace was one of tl
oldest and most honorable of the country, whi
enjoyed on every side high consideration.

Chauvignac turned his attention to this your
gentleman for the purpose of recovering, throug
him, his old position in the opinion of his town
men.

He displayed, when in his society in publ
places, a most familiar tone, raising his voice
that his terms of intimacy might be heard.

The result did not satisfy Chauvignac; of th
two friends, one lost the public respect, and th
other did not regain it.

Chauvignac soon found out that he had mi
calculated, and if he consoled himself, it was b
thinking how he could utilize in another way h
friend's credit.

The family of Olivier was not rich, and coul
not do much for its son; in addition, in consequenc
of his extreme prodigality, the young man foun
himself in great distress; his credit was gone; i
a word, he was overwhelmed with debt.

His companion in pleasure was to him an obje
of envy and admiration; he saw him live like
prince, without being troubled by a creditor.

One day he asked for an explanation of the prob
lem.

"How do you manage it," he inquired, "tha
without any fortune, you satisfy all your tastes an
fancies, while I, with some resources, am oblige
to exist in privation and contract debts to d
that?"

This was the ground Chauvignac expected his
panion to occupy. He remained, however, some
ne without replying, in order to give more im-
rtance to his confidences; then, with a diabolical
ile, he replied:
'You would be happy to be as I am?''
'Can you ask it?''
'Well, it rests with you alone to be better off
n myself.''
'What must I do for that?'' replied Olivier, in a
e of mingled pleasure and greed.
Chauvignac considered his pupil sufficiently pre-
ed to receive his communication.
'Listen to me,'' he said, with a mysterious air.
ou must be acquainted with the wise and popu-
aphorism, which dates almost from the creation:
' 'Mankind are divided into two great divisions:
dupers and the dupes.'
'Consider, and reply frankly. To which cate-
y do you prefer to belong?''
But,'' replied the young scapegrace, astonished
his brusque question, ''you take me unawares;
r demand merits reflection.''
Well, we will make the reflections,'' said the
vincial Mephistopheles, ''and we will draw our
strations of the subject from that immense and
ley crowd called society.''
he two friends found themselves at the moment
able together at the door of one of the best cafes
he town. It was Sunday; the weather was fine;
eat number of persons were passing to and fro.
Look,'' said Chauvignac; ''you see that thin
, with bent back, shabby clothes, and sad look?
t unhappy being has devoted his life to paying
debts left him by a dying father. He is old; he
lly has enough to eat; see, no one notices him.

"Look at that fat fellow, puffed out with pri and insolence; see how self-satisfied he is; o might compare him to a peacock with spread ta Well, he is a tradesman, who has never ceased introduce fraud and lying into his business. O fine day he started as a banker and usurer. He more than a millionaire. . . . He condescends patronizingly notice the people who bow abjec before him.

"The first man is a dupe, the second a duper."

"Or, to speak the whole truth," said Olivi "the first is an honest man and the second a r cal."

"Be it so," continued the tempter; "I agree w you; but, behold another example, to which, think, you will not make the same application.

"You should know, better than anyone else, young man full of heart, intelligence, and ener who, for want of sufficient fortune, leads a life, some respects, of privation and suffering. That m is overwhelmed with debt, and if he attempts play to recover himself he is certain to lose.

"Near him, at this moment, is one of his frien who, without property or fortune, possesses a p ennial income. He is always lucky at play; and may flatter himself that he has no taste with the means of satisfying it.

"The first of these two friends is a dupe, second is a——"

Chauvignac paused to allow Olivier to compl the period.

"What would you imply?" said Olivier, w began to comprehend.

"What would I imply?" returned Chauvign with shameless cynicism. "I would make you derstand that that favorite of fortune, that lu

ayer whose fortune excites your envy, is one of society of philosophers who possess means as tain as they are easy of assuring the favors of rtune.''

''But,'' Olivier hastened to say, from an instinct honesty, ''to cheat at play is the deed of a scal.''

'It is on that point, my friend, that we are t agreed. Permit me to say that you are comtely mistaken; I am about to prove it to you. first kindly explain to me what you mean by eating at play.''

'To cheat at play is to influence the game by derhand trickery,'' replied Olivier.

'Very good. If that is the case I will soon prove you that honest people do not scruple to use ckery.

Every day perfectly honest people endeavor by ret means to turn fortune in their direction.

'One man, in placing himself at table for the pose of play, takes the side nearest the door, ause he thinks it lucky. If he wins, he leaves gains in disorder, because he believes that if stopped to count and arrange it the lucky vein uld end.

'Others make amulets of the dried heart of a ck fowl, the head of a beetle, or of a bit of the d of a rope with which some one has been ged.

Now kindly answer me this question: What he purpose of these mysterious charms, except gain, in an underhand manner, another person's ney by turning in his favor the luck of the ne?

Under these circumstances, if the result does

not answer the expectations, it is perfectly fair
form a judgment on the fact.

"Between these means and ours there is on
the difference between the thoughts and the finge
The moral position is the same.

"Yes, these honest people, in spite of what th
say and do, are of our company; and if they
not venture further on the path of trickery th
they term illegal, it is because they dare not.

"I will even go further," added Chauvigna
excited by his own sophistry; "take an individu
—one of those heroes of probity—show him h
to gain money with the certainty of never bei
found out, and I am certain he will accept t
chance. Believe me, I know much more than
venture to say."

"All that," returned Olivier, "only proves the
are honest people who are not honest, but not th
cheating is not a crime. Besides, the law punish
it as such."

"That is true," replied the cunning Chauvigna
"but that does not prove the law is right. I ma
tain that the law is reprehensible, the art of c
recting the chances of fortune really deserving
couragement."

Olivier could not resist smiling.

"I am speaking seriously," added Chauvigna
"yes, the art of trickery at play is meritorio
and that is so because it is useful. If the St
had the slightest degree of intelligence, it wou
not only be favorable to trickery, it would end
it with rewards and recompense."

"Then I no longer understand any moral law
said Olivier.

"That is because you have never, like myse
studied sound philosophy. Now, listen to me;

nable you to understand, I will submit a comparion to your judgment.

"Many accidents occur through eating mushooms. Well, if people were certain that mushooms were poisonous, no one would risk eating iem.

"It may be the same with play. If one expected, very time one gambled, to be victimized, it is quite rtain one would never run the risk.

"Play would then become what it should be—a mple unbending of the mind.

"If such were the case, my dear friend, do you ot understand what a glorious thing the modern reek would have accomplished, in doing more for ie cause of morality than all the moralists in the orld?

"In addition, I avow to you that although I ould not take a pin, I not only feel no scruple in rrecting fortune, but, in using trickery, I am cerin that I pursue an end eminently serviceable to e true interests of humanity. The art of cheatg at play is for me only the highest philosophy ractically utilized."

Olivier listened with the greatest attention to his iend's eloquent defense of the art of card-sharpg. Signs of approval were visible, and his conience began to succumb before so many sophisated arguments.

Chauvignac perceived the effect he had proiced, and, continuing his pernicious task, said:

"Let us examine the case. Is there room for sitation? On one side riches, pleasure, enjoyents of every kind; on the other, pitiless creditors, ain, poverty, and contempt."

"But," said Olivier, in great excitement, "suppse we are detected—what then?"

"How childlike and timid you are!" returne the tempter. "Come with me within, and judge fo yourself how easy and secure it is.

"You see over there that big fellow, Benoit, wh has a nice little income. I will propose a little gam of piquet, which will enable him to pay our bi here. It is a pity there is no need to make hi lose more."

Benoit is greeted by the two gentlemen, the gam is accepted, the desired result quickly follows, an the cafe bill is paid.

Chauvignac and his friend leave the cafe, an when they are in the street, the former sums up h pleadings in the following terms:

"It is as easy as that. What, is it nothing to b able to fight against fortune, and spoil a lot of no dles whom she so often favors?"

"Does it take long to learn all that is nece sary?" inquired Olivier, bewildered by all that h had heard and seen.

"That depends," answered his perfidious frien "It is like the art of playing the piano—some a able to give pleasure in a short time. That natu ally depends on the method and the professor.

"But we are near my place; let us enter, an while we are enjoying our cigars, I will give yo further explanations."

But Olivier, moved by the last struggle of h dying honesty, hesitated.

"Good Heaven! You engage yourself to nothi by entering; you can always act as you pleas Besides, it is well to know all you can; and what impart does not arm you for attack, it will on serve for defense. One never knows what ma happen."

Chauvignac would not have shown so much pe

verance had he not seen an opportunity of playg his dear friend a treacherous trick.

Olivier ended by accepting the invitation; they re soon luxuriously reclining and smoking choice gars. Chauvignac, cards in hand, commenced his testable lessons.

"Observe this play, and tell me if you can detect y trick in my manipulation of the cards?"

The novice studied the cards with great attenn, but, owing to his want of knowledge of the bject, could discover nothing.

"You detect nothing in my play," said Chaugnac, "and yet the cards have undergone a ange called *biseautage*."

This arrangement of the cards enables the Greek withdraw if necessary some cards, and to class em afterwards in the order most useful to the erator.

Chauvignac, joining example to theory, showed his pupil how to accomplish this trick.

'Now," he said, "to prove that it is not difficult, u must do it yourself. Let us take our places the table, and suppose we are playing for one ousand francs."

Although Olivier had no great talent for the art conjuring, he succeeded, nevertheless, through lessons of his friend, in winning two games of rte.

'That trick," continued Chauvignac, "is the st elementary and easy of all. A little later I l teach you more difficult lessons. You will, I pe, in time become an accomplished philisopher."

Olivier did not reply, because his mind was occud by a thousand conflicting thoughts.

Chauvignac thought his victim sufficiently ened and compromised, and therefore abandoned

him to the temptations he had suggested. On th pretext of some visits to make, the two friends sep arated.

Two days later the professor came in search o his pupil.

"Tell me," he said, "would not you like to mak a pleasant little excursion with me?"

"Your proposal," returned Olivier, "comes at bad time; not only am I not in funds, but I am i search of a thousand francs to meet a cursed bi that is due this very day."

"Is that all?" said Chauvignac, taking a note fo that amount from his pocket-book. "Take it, yo can return it to-morrow."

"Are you mad?" said Olivier.

"Very likely; but my madness induces me t open you a credit for another thousand francs o account of thirty thousand francs which are wai ing for you," returned Chauvignac.

"Explain, because your words almost madde me."

"This is my explanation:

"M. le Comte de Vandermool, a rich Belgia capitalist, one of the most enthusiastic gambler living, and one who without making a noise ma lose one hundred thousand francs, is at this m ment in Boulogne, where he purposes staying eigh days. It is therefore a question of reducing th financial rotundity of this millionaire. Nothin could be easier. One of my friends and Parisia confederates, named Chaffard, is already near hi on the watch; there is nothing now to do but set work.

"You are now one of us, and in a few days wi be in a position to satisfy your creditors, and bu a new cashmere for your mistress."

"But you conclude too rapidly," said Olivier, sitating. "I have not yet said 'yes.' "

"I do not ask you to say 'yes' now; wait until e arrive at Boulogne. Go now and pay the bill; e shall start in two hours. Post-horses have been dered; we start from my place; be punctual."

On the same night the two philosophers arrived Boulogne. They stopped at the "Hotel de Univers," which was the one pointed out by their complice, whom they almost immediately met. e announced that there was no time to be lost, id that operations must be begun at once, the omte having spoken of the possibility of his leav- g next day.

The travelers dined hurriedly, made a little ange in their dress, and then directed their steps the apartment of the Belgian millionaire.

Chaffard, who preceded them, introduced his iends as landed proprietors residing in the neigh- rhood.

M. le Comte de Vandermool was a man of about ty, with a countenance full of good faith and ndor. He wore several foreign decorations.

The newcomers were welcomed with charming fability. He even invited them to pass the even- g with him.

We need hardly say the invitation was accepted. The conversation, at first animated, lost spirit tle by little. The Comte then proposed cards, hich proposal was readily accepted by his guests.

While the table was prepared, Chauvignac nded to his young friend and pupil two packs of rds, carefully arranged, which were to be sub- ituted for those supplied by the Comte.

The game fixed on was ecarte, and Olivier held e hand, the other two accomplices pretending not

to understand the game, and confining themselve to bets one against the other. Seeing that their in terests were identical, it was like piercing wate with a sword.

Olivier, astonished at first by this declaratio soon by the aid of signs from Chauvignac unde stood the position, and comprehended that this re serve arose from the desire to disarm suspicion i case of success.

The Comte, being immensely rich, would onl play for bank notes. "For shame!" said h "Metal is not sweet enough in a salon."

The new recruit, confused at first in taking pa in an ambush, following the last inspiration of h conscience, neglected the advantages offered b trickery, and confined himself to the chances c fortune.

That capricious goddess did not support the be ter impulse; in two hands he lost his only note c one thousand francs.

It was then that, incited by a significant glanc of Chauvignac's and also by the desire of recove ing what he had lost, Olivier made use of the i famous instructions of his friend.

His work, in truth, was very easy. The Com was very short-sighted, and almost held his card against his nose in consequence.

Fortune, as you might suppose, turned, and note of one thousand francs accumulated in the hand of Olivier, who, in some degree intoxicated by h luck, played ardently.

M. de Vandermool was himself a very goo player; his repeated losses did not lessen his jo viality and good temper. Any one looking at h happy countenance would assuredly have taken hi for the winner.

"I am not in luck," he said, taking a pinch of uff from a superb gold box. "In the last game, r instance, I vainly thought of everything; there no chance for me."

Olivier remained serious; he continued his play ith feverish avidity. Nevertheless, desiring in me way to acknowledge the good temper of his ble adversary, he said, with a smile which he ied to make amiable:

"You are too good, M. le Comte."

"Too good, you say? But that is just the word. es, I compliment you on it, M. Olivier. Pray nd me the cards."

"Impossible! Trump! trump! I cut and the ng of diamonds; that makes five points for me."

"Yes, evidently bad luck has stamped its har- on into me," said the Comte. "That makes ghty thousand francs; I see that quickly it will one hundred thousand. It is only fair to add, y dear sir, that it is not my custom to lose more an that sum, and if that should happen, I pro- se supper before losing my last twenty thousand. hat will perhaps change my vein; and you owe e that chance."

They all accepted the proposition.

Olivier, rendered mad by the possession of eighty ousand francs, could not resist the desire of ex- essing his gratitude to Chauvignac, and for that rpose led him to a corner of the room.

The miserable dupe was far from imagining the ightful deception prepared for him by his two complices.

The Belgian capitalist, the worthy Comte, was other than a clever sharper, brought by Chau- gnac from Paris for the sole purpose of playing part in the comedy which should end in the ruin the son of a noble family.

Olivier did not notice that, while he withdrew from the table, the false millionaire changed the cards which they had been using for others *biseautees* in a contrary manner.

During supper they were all very gay, although all drank moderately; each kept cool for the termination of the game, at which they were soon engaged.

"Now," said the Parisian sharper, "I desire to finish quickly. I stake twenty thousand francs on the first game."

The stake was, as a matter of course, accepted—but, cruel deception! that sum, on which Olivier with good reason counted, was won by his opponent.

A game for forty thousand produced the same result.

Olivier, bewildered, discouraged, lost, no longer knew what to do. He vainly manipulated the cards; he only had valueless ones. His opponent had a handful of trumps, and he gave them to him.

In his despair he consulted Chauvignac, but he signalled him to go on. The miserable fellow followed his advice, and continued to lose.

Wild, lost to all self-control, he played for mad amounts in the hope of regaining his luck, and quickly found that he had lost in his turn one hundred thousand francs to his adversary.

This was followed by an infamous scene. The pretended Comte stopped, and, crossing his arms:

"M. Olivier de X——," he said, severely, "you must be very rich to lightly risk so large a sum; but that is a question for yourself. Still, however rich you may be, you must know that it is not enough to lose one hundred thousand francs; it is also necessary to pay them. Besides, I have al-

ady given you an example. First, then, hand me
e amount I have won, after which we can con-
ue the game."

"Nothing could be more correct, sir," stam-
red Olivier, "and I am ready to satisfy you; but
u must know that—gaming debts—my word—"

"Damnation, sir!" exclaimed the Comte, strik-
g the table a violent blow as he spoke. "You talk
me of your word. You are a nice fellow to talk
e that. Listen to me! We will now play another
me. I will now speak clearly. M. Olivier de
——, you are a cheat—yes, a cheat! The cards
d and supplied by you are *biseautees.*"

"Sir! you insult me!" returned Olivier.

"You astonish me by that statement," the sham
mte replied, ironically.

"That is too much, sir; you shall give me satis-
tion this instant! Do you understand? Follow
!"

"No, no; we will settle this matter on the spot.
sten: your two friends shall be your witnesses. I
ll send for two others."

The rascal, who had risen, rang violently.

His own servant entered.

"Go at once in search of the *Procureur du Roi,*
d beg him to come here at once on a most im-
rtant matter. Be speedy. Do you understand?"

"Mercy, sir, mercy! Do not altogether ruin
!" pleaded the wretched Olivier. "I surrender
rself to your mercy."

"Stephen," said the Greek, "listen to me: Stand
ind that door, and if in ten minutes I do not
ntradict my first orders, execute them."

"Now, sir, it is between us," continued the ras-
. "The cards used to-night were insinuated by
u in place of those I had provided. You must

inclose them in a packet and affix on it the seal
your arms engraved on that ring you wear.''

Olivier looked in vain for succor from Cha
vignac to Chaffard, but only perceived signs to r
sign himself to all. He did what was required.

''That is not all, sir,'' added the false Comt
''as my play was fair, I have a right to some s
curity. You must accept bills at short dates f
the sum of one hundred thousand francs due
me.''

And as the wretched Olivier hesitated to satis
that demand, his pitiless opponent advanced
ring the bell.

''Do not ring, sir, do not ring,'' said the your
man. ''I will sign.''

He did so.

The ambush was a success.

Olivier returned to his family and made humb
confession of what he had done. His father r
signed himself to pay the debt, thinking more
his honor than of his fortune.

The Society of Philosophers had participated
the rascality just described in the persons of Cha
fard and the Belgian capitalist.

Chaffard was entrusted with the task of obtai
ing the payment of the bills, and he acted with su
zeal and energy that, as we have already stated, t
hundred thousand francs was paid.

Chauvignac, always on the alert, quickly o
tained his share, which amounted to half, for h
services in planning the stroke and preparing t
victim. The other fifty thousand francs was in t
hands of Chaffard, to be divided between the thr
philosophers.

But the cunning rascal, finding himself in posse
sion of sufficient funds to supply himself with lu

ies and pleasures for at least a year, and fearing
om day to day to be forced to give an account to
stice for his numerous crimes, instead of going
Paris, traveled to Brussels to play in his turn
e part of a French capitalist. His two asso-
ates were informed of this by a letter from Chau-
gnac, to whom Chaffard had announced his in-
ntion.

Raymond took the news with philosophical calm;
had learned by experience that you cannot de-
nd on the conscientiousness of a cheat. The
nduct of Chaffard did not surprise him; it was
some degree inevitable.

But Andreas took the matter differently; he was
rious at being made the plaything of a man he
oked upon as his inferior, if not in physical
engtli, at least in intellect, and he vowed to find
e robber and force him to disgorge his spoil.

His head filled with ruses and tricks, he started
r Belgium; but, as a matter of precaution, he
ok as his companion a renowned boxer, a sort of
rculean bulldog, whom he proposed to set at his
e accomplice.

Raymond, once separated from the man whom he
ght have looked on as his bad angel, felt no
nger equal to continue the hazardous life into
nich he had been enticed. The incessant dangers
which he was surrounded, some remains of con-
ience, a return to better sentiments, all com-
ned to make him decide to quit forever the pro-
ssion of a duper of dupes.

Possessor of twenty thousand francs, he made
at sum a base for existence which would give him
ne to find an employment by which he could exist
norably. But, at the end of some months, guided
some of his old love of play in general and for

roulette in particular, he visited the watering place which are so rich in opportunities of play, and i was at them he entered on his famous crusad against banks and croupiers.

The reader knows the result of the elaborate com binations of friend Raymond, a result inevitable t every player who thinks he can fix the favors o fortune on himself.

It took Raymond some days to tell me the pre ceding story, because when the signal for play wa given he left me at once to occupy himself wit hypothetical combinations.

His new system, about which he would never sa a word, and that I supposed would be sure to tur in the same inductive circle as the old one, brough him no other benefit except the dreams of fortun which so delighted him.

When I left Baden he was destitute of all re sources, and I was compelled to increase the amour of his debt to me. The reason I made this ne sacrifice to the monomaniac was that I had ac quired proof that since his reformation he had pre ferred to endure the most severe privation rathe than return to his old plan of cheating.

I left Raymond perfectly happy and completel assured that he would soon repay me. What I ha given him, he said, was enough to break the ban at Baden.

These golden hopes were far from being realize because some time after, when I was giving my pe formances in Paris, I received a letter from Ra mond, in which he asked for the last time for assis ance until he obtained expected employment.

I did not answer, to avoid new demands, but wrote to a friend at Strasbourg to forward to th

unhappy man the sum of fifty francs without informing him whence it came.

Another year passed without my hearing a word of Raymond, and I thought him dead, when one day, returning to my residence in a hired carriage, I could not reach my door because the entrance was blocked by a very elegant equipage

I got out, and what was my surprise to see that my visitor was my friend Raymond, most fashionably dressed. He wore, as in his fortunate days, his full beard, only it had not yet reached its full length.

I was so astonished that I could not speak, thinking myself the victim of an illusion.

"Well," said Raymond, "this is like our meeting at Baden. How a beard changes a man, especially when that man is transformed almost to a millionaire!"

"Come in," I said, "quickly, because I am eager to learn the happy combinations that have made your fortune."

My visitor silently followed me, and even when we had entered my room he did not speak.

"But," I said, "how is it the newspapers have not spoken of your lucky vein? You know that when they lose, the play bankers do not fail to publish the fact in order to attract other players."

Raymond still continued thoughtful and silent; at last he said:

"I have been trying to find a way of prolonging your error; as I cannot succeed, I will tell you the truth.

"You doubtless remember that at the commencement of my story I concealed my name from respect for one of the members of my family. It was my brother, who occupied an honorable official po-

sition. That brother, who, thank Heaven! never knew more of my career than that I had dissipated my fortune, died three months ago, without a will. I was his sole heir. This event has given me an income of twenty-five thousand pounds. These are the simple facts that have transformed me into a capitalist.

"I have completely renounced play," added Raymond; "I am sufficiently rich and have no ambition to add to my fortune. But," with a proud air, "if I desired to do so, how I would break the banks, and what a signal vengeance I would take of my former bad luck and its remorseless tools. But I am too happy now for revenge to find a place in my heart."

Raymond went to live at the Marais where he enjoyed the respect of his neighbors. When I made up my mind to reside in the country I lost sight of him.

Three years later on visiting Paris I learned that Raymond was dead, and that he left all his fortune to various benevolent institutions.

THE METHOD.

We have now arrived at the most important part of this work. It is a question of explaining to the reader the different maneuvers used by the Greeks whose portraits I have sketched. In order to render them comprehensible, I must enter into details which I hope will not lack a certain interest.

At the same time I should like to make it clear that I do not purpose to give a course of lessons in conjuring. My purpose is not to create tricksters, but to show how they perform tricks. I shall only impart sufficient information to enable players to place themselves in safety, and especially to understand the danger of playing with persons of whose integrity they are not sure.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF CHEATING AT CARDS.

1. The false cut.
2. The pass stroke.
3. The jump.
4. The big card.
5. The bridge.
6. The roofed card.
7. Drawing the card.
8. Withdrawing cards.
9. Placing the cards.
10. Seeing the cards.
11. Changing the packs.
12. The box under the cuff.
13. The false shuffle.
14. The classified shuffle.
15. The partial shuffle.
16. The fan.
17. The swallow-tail.
18. Adhesive or slippery cards.
19. Marked cards.
20. Cards not cut on the square.
21. Pointed cards.
22. Pricked cards.
23. Cards with uneven corners.
24. Cards with designs at back.
25. Spotting the back.
26. The chaplet.
27. The marking ring.
28. The reflecting snuffbox.
29. Signalling.

CHAPTER 1.

THE FALSE CUT.

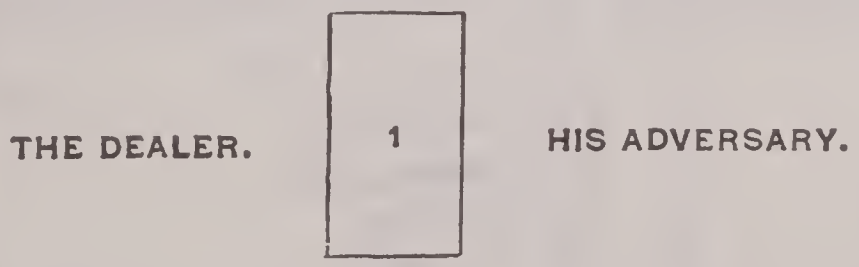
The operation of cutting falsely is the most important of all the artifices employed in cheating, and for that reason the Greek devotes great address and care to its execution.

To well understand what a false cut means, I will first recall the purpose and result of an ordinary cut at cards.

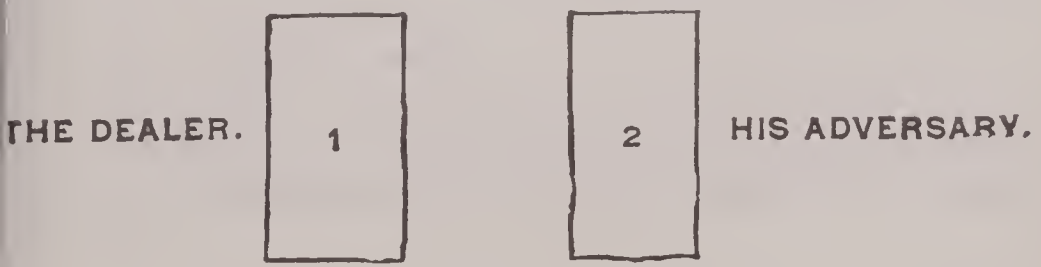
It is a kind of guarantee of good faith that is usual between perfectly honorable people.

This is the way it is usually done:

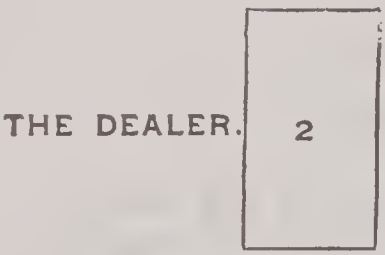
The pack is placed by the dealer near his adversary.



The adversary cuts the pack—that is to say, he raises a number of the cards that he places by the dealer's side, thus making two packs of one—Nos. 1 and 2.



The dealer lifts the pack No. 2 and places it o
that of No. 1.



The two packs now form one, and all arrange
ments of an artificial kind are reversed.

It is very important to the Greek to elude thi
disorganization, which allows him no longer t
count on the combinations he has made against hi
adversary. It is therefore necessary for the suc
cess of his trickery that the two packs, after sus
taining the change following the cut, should re
take their old position in his hands.

He employs to produce that result differen
means, of which the following are the principal:

1. Destroying the cut.
2. The pass stroke.
3. The jump.
4. The bridge.
5. The big card.

CHAPTER II.

DESTROYING THE CUT.

The reader who is not initiated in the mysteries of conjuring might find astonishing, if not incredible, the fact that a Greek can transpose invisibly two packets of cards under the eyes of his adversaries. But nothing is more certain.

Books on conjuring show how this trick is executed. This book not having that purpose, I will content myself with exposing here the preparations and arrangements requisite.

When the Greek lifts packet No. 2 to place it on No. 1, as in Fig. 3, instead of placing them equally (which would prevent him distinguishing one from the other), he places No. 2 a little behind No. 1, so that it overlaps the other by about half an inch, as in Fig. 4.

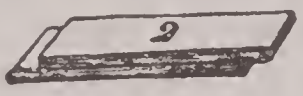


Fig. 4.

By this favorable position of the cards the Greek when he has the pack in his hands glides the little finger of his left hand between the packets 1 and 2, and is then prepared to break the cut, that is, to place the portion of the cards which should be underneath on the top, as invisibly as possible, when the best moment comes.

When they raise the pack clever Greeks have a more subtle plan of keeping the two packets separated one from another for the purpose of breaking the cut.

They take in the right hand packet No. 2, as if t place it on the other, but instead of doing so the know how, in raising No. 1, to keep a little division which is sufficient for the introduction of the littl finger of the left hand, as shown in preceding ex ample.

Fig. 5.

I said that the Greek breaks the cut when th best moment comes. I must explain that phrase.

Only beginners are in a hurry to execute thi delicate maneuver. The experienced Greek take his time, and, by the aid of movements accompany ing an animated conversation, he succeeds in con cealing his manipulation of breaking the cut.

The following is an instance:

"Are the cards shuffled?" he inquires, with a genial air, advancing his hand. Or, with the same gesture, he turns to the marker as if to examine the position of the game, affecting a little abstrac tion of mind.

Nevertheless, as invisible as it may be made breaking the cut is a very difficult operation t carry out when large stakes are in question. Ther the dealer must be quiet in his movements, because the least gesture beyond what is necessary to deal ing the cards would arouse suspicion.

But even then, the resources of the Greek are not exhausted; if he does not use the trick described he uses another, having many strings to his bow.

CHAPTER III.

THE PASS STROKE.

All Greeks are sharp, intelligent, and cunning, t they do not all possess the same powers in the t of conjuring. Many of them never succeed in visibly breaking the cut, and they are obliged to sort to means less difficult. The pass stroke is of at kind.

The trick has the same object as the former one. well done it has as little chance of being discov-ed.

It is necessary, in order to explain what follows, return to the moment when the two packets have st been divided by the cut, as before described.

Fig. 6.

It is necessary for the Greek, in raising the two ckets, instead of placing No. 2 on No. 1, to cover to glide under as shown in Fig. 7.

When he raises packet No. 2 the Greek places it tween the index finger and the middle one, so at in lifting No. 1 he subtilely makes it pass be-w.

To facilitate the introduction of this packet the arper takes care to swell the pack while he mixes e cards.

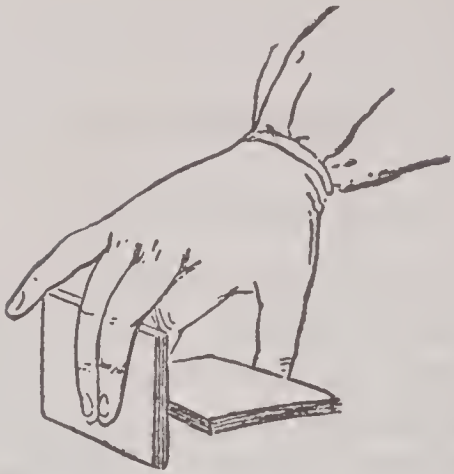


Fig. 7.

Some Greeks, instead of placing No. 2 between the two first fingers, take it simply in the hand and cause it to glide under the other by the above method. But if that is done the transposition is more apparent.

CHAPTER IV.

THE JUMP.

The jump is a trick so simple that it is astonish-
g any one can be taken in by it. In spite of that,
confess that the first time I saw it done I was as
uch a dupe as others.

In this case the Greek, instead of placing packet
o. 2 on No. 1, raises the latter without hesitation,
en simply places that packet in his left hand,
nich he holds a little advanced, and places No. 1
ove.

The false cut, like the one preceding it, is usually
rformed in gambling dens and low drinking
uses.

CHAPTER V.

THE BIG CARD.

The title of this chapter sufficiently indicates tl kind of trick I am about to expose.

It is a question of a card unusually large intr duced into a pack, which compels, by its salie edges, the cut to be made where it is placed.

If the Greek has made his combinations to wi the cut made at the big card alters nothing, whe it occurs at the very place where his little arrang ments begin.

The big card is also employed by the Greek a mark to break the cut when he considers it to h advantage to do so.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BRIDGE.

The bridge is one of the most ancient tricks of ıe Greeks. When it is well done, it is difficult to uard oneself against it.

As in the preceding example, its object is to estroy the cut, and thus preserve the combinations ıade to correct fortune.

The Greek, holding the pack in his right hand, ıakes it as large as he can in bending it in the irection of the first finger of the left hand, then he resses the upper part of the pack into an arched orm in the opposite way, as in Fig. 8.

Fig. 8.

This done, he passes the upper packet of cards nder the other, as if shuffling the cards.

The bent cards fly back, and it is the void between the two arcs which forces the cut there rather han to any other part of the pack, as is shown n Fig. 9.

Fig. 9.

The smallest interval between the two packet suffices to force the cut.

They employ also for the same purpose wha is termed the roofed card. The two packets abov and below are bent shortways, so that in placing th two arched portions of the pack, they presen toward the edge an interval which compels the cu at that place. This plan is not nearly so good a the former one, and is rarely used.

CHAPTER VII.

DRAWING THE CARD.

To draw the card, that is to change one card for ıother. In the hands of a clever Greek this change executed so imperceptibly, that it is impossible r the most suspicious eye to detect it.

Suppose a Greek, in dealing the cards, has recog- ızed, by means which I will presently explain, that at which he is about handing his opponent would useful to himself, he draws the card, that is to y, instead of taking the card on top and giving to his adversary, he presents him with the next.

I will now explain how that perfidious substitu- ɔn is effected.

When the Greek prepares to draw the card, he kes pains in dealing to advance on the pack two

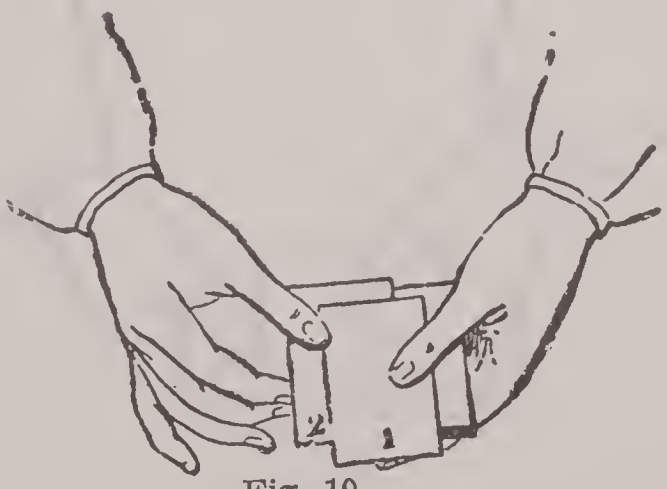


Fig. 10.

ırds beyond the others, as is shown in Nos. 1 and 2 f Fig. 10.

In ordinary dealing No. 1 would be given before

No. 2; but if the Greek thinks it will serve his evil purpose, he draws the card, that is to say, substitutes the second for the first.

This is his method. Holding the two cards together between his index finger and thumb, he gives them a movement which causes No. 1 to recoil and No. 2 to advance, as shown on the opposite page.

The right hand then looses the first card, takes up the second, and delivers it.

This movement, that I have been obliged to divide to make it understood, must be executed at the same moment, and with the rapidity of lightning.

Clever sharpers, while advancing the right hand to deal the card, give to the left a little movement to recoil which completely covers the operation.

This maneuver may be continued as often as the Greek requires, for his interests, one card rather than another.

To give an idea of the illusion produced by this

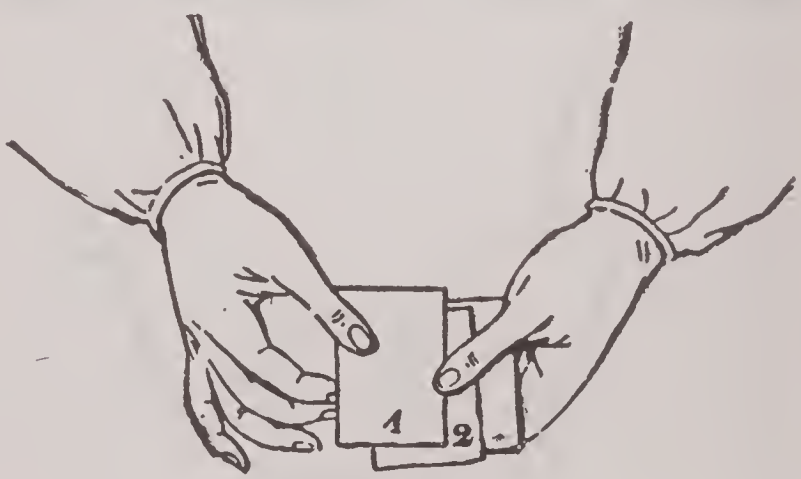


Fig. 11.

trick, I may mention a certain Greek (referred to in my "Confidences") who, after having placed the king of spades on the pack, dealt the cards one

ter another, and by thirty-one substitutions in ccession, made the king of spades the last card the pack. I avowed then, and I repeat the state- nt now, that I could not detect one of those anges, so skillfully were they executed.

CHAPTER VIII.

WITHDRAWING CARDS.

The reader will have difficulty in believing, unle initiated into the mysteries of conjuring, that Greek can withdraw, under the eyes of his adve sary, one or more cards, and restore them to t pack, without being detected. Such, however, the fact.

The art of withdrawing is one of the most val able artifices of conjuring; it exacts a great natur ability and consummate technical skill.

To execute the trick of withdrawal, the Gre first holds in his left hand the cards to be remov diagonally on the others and a little advanc towards the right hand, as in

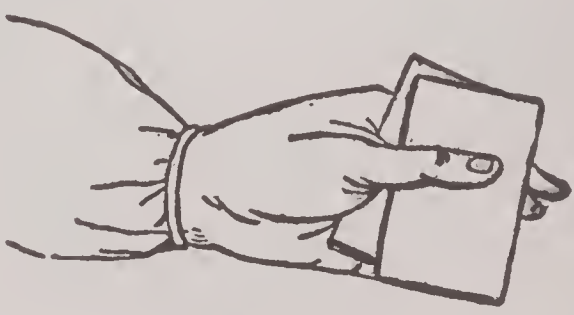


Fig. 12.

They are then taken in the right hand a

ssed against the four fingers and the base of the mb; the cards are then bent a little, as in

Fig. 13.

'here is another kind of withdrawel, but this ess practiced by Greeks than by conjurers, who ploy it in circumstances where the first would be suitable. It consists in pressing the cards itly between the little finger and the thumb of hand which withdraws the cards. By this plan cards do not require bending.

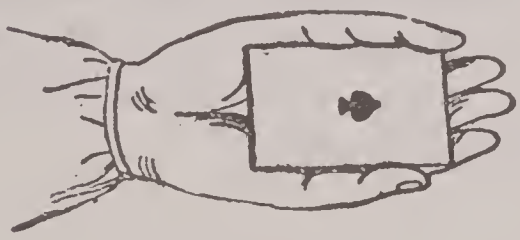


Fig. 14.

he reader doubtless finds it astonishing that one can hold concealed six cards in his hand, even more, without being detected. But what more surprise you is that an adroit Greek , with the hand in which the cards are hidden, and still preserve sufficient freedom to gesticu- without any constraint.

CHAPTER IX.

PLACING THE CARDS.

Once in possession of the cards coveted, t
Greek, whether he is playing at lansquenet, at b
carat, or vingt-et-un, knows at any moment how
place them in the pack in such a way as to insu
their coming into his hand.

This operation is the simplest I have yet
scribed.

The Greek, in order to place the cards that
has withdrawn, waits for the moment of collecti
all or part of the pack. Then, in drawing th
to him, he places in that packet the cards that
has in reserve, taking care to hide the operation
spreading his hand over it.

CHAPTER X.

SEEING THE CARD.

It is necessary sometimes for a Greek to know
card in the pack.

With great rapidity he opens with one hand,
the help of his little finger, the pack at the
ace where that card is to be found, and, with a
ick glance, sees what it is.

This movement, sudden as lightning, is imper-
otible to the other players, because it is covered
a gesture, and the backs of the cards are turned
vards them.

CHAPTER XI.

CHANGING THE PACKS.

The way this substitution is effected varies a
cording to the nature and training of the trickste
The Greek of fashionable life, for instance, on t
rare occasions when he uses this artifice, emplo
much more delicate art than his comrade of low
rank.

Nevertheless, the following plan is used by Gree
of all kinds:

That over-sharp gentleman has under his coa
at the back of his trousers, one or several litt
pockets, called *finettes,* in which are placed t
packs of cards to be substituted for those in use
the house he is playing at. The packs are plac
in a way to make it easy to remove them, as sho
in Fig. 15.

While keeping his right hand on his hip, t
cheat saunters near the tables before play is begu
and, seizing a favorable opportunity, makes t
exchange, getting rid of the new pack by putti
them into a deep pocket, called *profonde,* which
made under the skirt of his coat.

Others, more impudently clever, do not fear
execute the trick under the eyes of their opponen

For this operation the pockets are placed in fro
of the waistcoat, and called *costieres,** witho
doubt because they are placed on the ribs, a lit
below the heart, hidden by the coat.

1st.—In seating himself to play, the Greek h
cunningly taken from one of the *costieres* a pa
of prepared cards, and he holds them concealed

right hand, as I have explained in the article Withdrawing Cards.

2nd.—He takes in the left hand the pack on the le, as if to unseal it, and places his own above it, ing care that both packs are hidden by his right nd.

3rd.—He makes pass above, by dividing them,

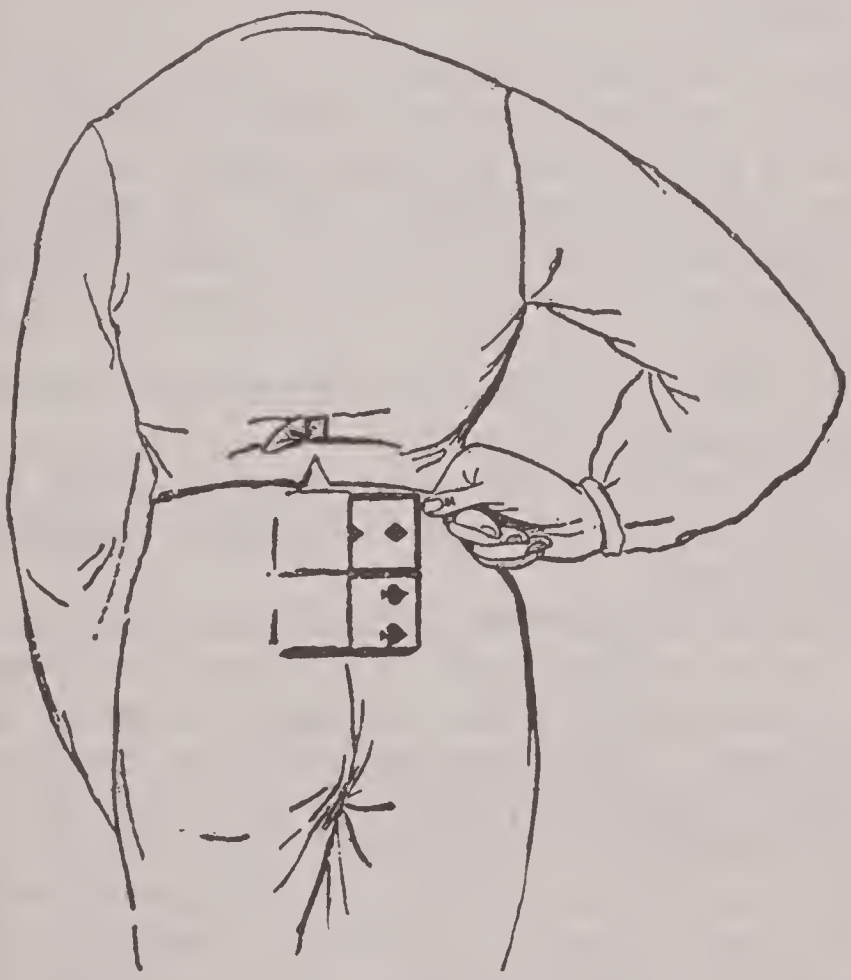


Fig. 15.

pack that was below in accordance with the tem adopted in withdrawing cards.

th.—The last thing he does is to rid himself of first pack by placing it in the *profonde*.

To facilitate this, he pretends to draw his chair

See Fig. 25, Article "Lansquenet," p. 239.

nearer to the table, which gives him the opportuni of placing his hand near his pocket.

All the movements just described, form we m say, one alone; they are, in addition, executed wi equal promptitude and address in the midst of animated conversation provoked by the Greek.

We need not say that the covering of each pa is identical; the Greek has taken his precautions effect this.

Some sharpers who have to change many pac of cards, and who fear the danger of detection to often performing the trick described, ally the selves with an accomplice who, on condition receiving his share of the spoil, resigns himself the position of servant in the houses to be plu dered.

In such conditions the two Greeks peaceful realize considerable profits.

Other rascals, much more cunning, work sing handed, and still succeed in changing a great ma packs of cards.

The Greek discovers the name and address of t man who supplies cards to the house he frequen He makes a few little purchases to make his a quaintance. He returns several times for the sa purpose, then one fine day he says that his frie has asked him to purchase a dozen or more pac of cards according to the importance of the shop.

The next morning, under the pretext that t cards are not the right color, he returns them.

The packs are still sealed; the tradesman, wi out suspicion, exchanges them for others.

But the Greek has passed the night in unseali the covers and resealing them, by a process kno to jugglers; the cards have been marked by hi the tradesman has them now in his shop; the tri is done; the Greek waits for them to appear.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BOX UNDER THE CUFF.

'here exists a perfidious means for changing the
k under the eyes of an opponent. It is done
a tin box attached to the arm under the cuff,
hout apparently increasing its size.
'he Greek places cards there, and uses them as
wishes.
Vhen it is a question of cutting, he places with-
disguise his hand on the pack found on the table
is to quite cover it, then leaning a little on the
le-cover, he presses a spring which opens the
, when the prepared cards come out, while the
er pack is seized by small pincers and placed in
box.
n finishing this chapter on Withdrawing Cards,
ust inform the reader that while the different
ieuvers are very effective when combined, they
not be separately employed.
ating-houses, gambling hells, more or less aristo-
ic houses, and clubs exact different operations.
he Greek knows very well how to discern what
suits different players, and rarely risks the
ctice of this trick if he is not sure of its success.

CHAPTER XIII.

FALSE SHUFFLE.

Some people consider that false shuffles are r trickeries, when their end is not to organize cu able tricks but only to preserve them. Neverthel those guilty of these manipulations are far fr being innocent, and may be likened to those rece ers of stolen goods, who, if not exactly thieves, a punished by the law as such.

When the pack is prepared for cheating, eith by the Greek under the eyes of his adversary, by changing the pack against another prepared advance, it is important to him that his combi tions should not be deranged by mixing the car

For that purpose, he has recourse to false shu lings, which vary according to the necessity.

We may distinguish four kinds of false shu lings:

The Classified Shuffle.
The Partial Shuffle.
The Fan Shuffle.
The Swallow-Tail Shuffle.

(*a*) The Classified Shuffle.

The classified shuffle consists in pretending to m the cards while classing them in the order necessa to attain the object of cheating. Suppose, for stance, that a Greek playing at ecarte has, in tak up the cards, placed on the pack four cards of same suit, of which he wishes to make three trun and the trump card.

That is done by the classified shuffle. To acc

lish this, he divides the pack in two parts that e holds in each hand, as is done in ordinary uffling.

Every time he inserts the packets one in another, e is able to introduce on the four cards seven hers which complete those necessary to the deal. He offers them for cutting, breaks the cut, and hen he has dealt the eleven cards, the four last rm three trumps and the trump card.

(*b*) The Partial Shuffle.

The partial shuffle is used for games where only a ortion of the cards are dealt, such as ecarte. In his case, eleven cards having been arranged by the reek for the purpose of winning, it is important him they should not be deranged.

He, in consequence, passes the eleven cards under ne pack, taking care to place his little finger between the cards above and those below that he tries mix up to the twenty-first card.

When that is effected, he breaks the cut a second me to make the cards again return to the top of ne prepared pack; or, by making the bridge, he rces his opponent to do it for him.

(*c*) The Fan.

The fan is thus named, because for the execution f the false shuffle, the Greek displays the cards at rst in that form. He then divides them in two, olding them in each hand; then, using the fingers f his right hand, he passes the cards of that hand nder the packet on his left, which produces the ppearance of naturally shuffling them.

The cards, however, are not shuffled; but they emain in the position they would have occupied the cards had been cut, because the upper ones ave passed under the lower; it is therefore neces-

sary to repeat the operation, in order that the cards may return to their first position. This kind of shuffling may be repeated according to circumstances.

(*d*) The Swallow's Tail.

False shufflings are numerous; every Greek possesses a plan of mixing the cards peculiar to himself. The modifications are drawn from the principles described. It would take too long to enter into the details of such proceedings, which are very nearly the same.

The false shuffle with which I will finish this chapter presents a particular method, and is often used by Greeks.

To turn the suspicions that may be roused by the false shufflings already described, the Greek often employs the swallow's tail, which consists in dividing the cards into two parts and introducing others between them. But instead of equalizing the pack for the purpose of completing the shuffle, the Greek manages to make the packet he has inserted in the other one incline as in

Fig. 16.

Then commences an operation which is masked by the right hand.

The Greek, after passing packet No. 1 across No. 2, makes the lower one describe an arc of a circle towards the right, which frees it and allows it to be replaced under No. 1, its first position.

CHAPTER XIV.

CUT CARDS.

To use cut cards was one of the principal tricks the last century. This maneuver was then only own by the adepts of high standing, and made ny dupes. It is now only practical in gambling ıs, because the artifice is too gross to deceive any but the frequenters of such places. In spite of t, it is a powerful instrument for cheating in hands of some Greeks.

We mean by *biseautees* cards those larger at one l than the others, as shown in

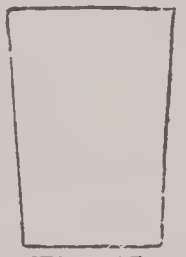


Fig. 17.

For this purpose the Greek, scissors in hand, s the cards on each side, commencing by about -eight of an inch, to terminate at nothing at opposite extremity.

One can readily understand that, all cards being the same size, if one is introduced of different ensions the Greek easily recognizes it, what- r pains are taken in shuffling them.

What occurs with one card holds good in several. us, I will suppose that the Greek has placed all court cards in one way, and the others in an- er; he may place the smaller ends at each ex-

tremity of the pack, and cut at the court cards
the others.

This arrangement of cut cards is only given
an illustration, because the cheat may be utilize
in other ways.

Some Greeks use cards cut in two ways; it
the same plan under another aspect.

Thus, for example, court cards are cut in a co
vex form at the sides, as in Fig. 18; the others
a concave way, Fig. 19.

The use of these cards produces the same resu
as the use of the former, only the play affords mo
scope for cheating.

Fig. 18.

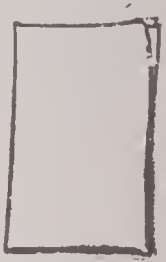


Fig. 19.

The cleverer the Greeks, the less the cards a
cut. I have seen cards used that required a clo
examination to detect the alteration made.

CHAPTER XV.

MARKED CARDS.

When white-backed cards are not of the best quality, they show different shades, that is to say the white is more or less pure. This imperfection arises from the bad quality of the cardboard employed in manufacture.

The Greek makes use of these slight differences to assist him in recognizing the cards, when they have been under his sharp eyes for a sufficient time.

If the cards do not present any difference of tint, the Greek supplies that want in a way that he only can detect. For this purpose he rubs, with a small rag impregnated with black-lead, the cards he desires to recognize.

The sharpest player will hardly recognize this trick. It would require the lynx eyes of a Greek to discover the nearly imperceptible stain.

We must add that the Greeks follow different plans in accordance with their capacity. One, the possessor of excellent sight and delicate powers of appreciation, makes use of tinted cards; while another, for other reasons, uses conjuring tricks, and wears large spectacles.

CHAPTER XVI.

CARDS THAT STICK OR SLIP.

As we have just seen, the Greeks make use of the slightest difference in the cards to influence the fortune of the game.

What the reader will find difficult to credit is the fact that a new pack of cards, just taken out of its cover, frequently permits an experienced sharper to recognize court cards from the others.

This is particularly the case when the pack has not been kept in a perfectly dry place.

The Greek, in dealing the cards, presses hard on the pack with his left thumb, as if to separate and cause the cards to glide to his right hand. Under these circumstances, the common cards pass more easily than the court ones.

And for this reason:

To brighten the color of the cards, gum is used. Now that mucilage being very adhesive, when warmed becomes a little sticky. That being so, the court cards, which have more color than the others, naturally are more adhesive.

This trick is particularly employed by the Greeks of the fashionable world, who perform it with an incredible tact and delicacy.

The lower-class Greeks have packs prepared which heighten the effects described. They take the pains to rub the court cards with a slight film of soap, while the others are impregated with a little finely powdered resin.

CHAPTER XVII.

CARDS NOT CUT ON THE SQUARE.

was once instructed by a judge to examine some
ks of cards seized in a gambling hell, and which
been used for vingt-et-un.

Thanks to my first trade of mechanic, I soon dis-
ered the trick by the means of which the banker,
lealing the cards, could tell if that which he took
n the pack was above or below ten.

The court cards and the aces were slightly cut on
side at the top, so as to be out of the square, as
wn in Fig. 20, but much less.

Fig. 20

trained eye was absolutely necessary to dis-
er the slight alteration; but it was enough for
Greek, and from that indication he took the top
l if favorable to his play, and in the opposite
made use of another.

He could also, when completing his play, hold
card or take another according to his interest.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRICKED CARDS.

The Greek employs the trick to mark the mo important cards of the pack.

With a slightly blunted pin he pricks at the co ner and side of the court card, so as to produce slight relief on the surface.

Some Greeks refine on this proceeding. Th divide the corner of the card, prick it within, a then refasten it. In case a little roughness r mains on the surface, which, even should it be r ticed, would pass for a defect in the cardboard.

Others still cleverer than these, instead of maki the punctures in front, do so at the back of t card; by this plan the mark is completely hidd by the puncture, it can then only be detected by t touch.

CHAPTER XIX.

CARDS WITH MARKED EDGES.

This is in a degree the same trick as the preceding one, except that it is done under the eyes of the victim.

The Greek, on every occasion that a card passes through his hands which, later on, may be useful to him, makes with his nail on the edge a slight mark. The delicate mark is easily appreciated by the sensitive fingers of a Greek.

I must say that the tricksters who make a point of using this plan possess an extreme delicacy of touch, which they foster by never being without gloves except when professionally engaged. Some even use pumice-stone to rub the fingers with, while others dip them in acids to give the skin extreme sensitiveness.

CHAPTER XX.

CARDS WITH BENT CORNERS.

These marks are made while playing. When the Greek has recognized some cards which may serve his purpose of cheating, he makes in the left bottom corner a slight fold or bend towards the inside. This alteration, light as it may be, produces a kind of radiance that the Greek's eye grasps in a moment.

This trick is usually employed to cheat at piquet. The Greek marks thus the ace, ten, and eight of any suit. With the assistance of conjuring tricks already described, he knows how to deal all or part of a sequence, against which it is impossible for his opponent to contend.

CHAPTER XXI.

CARDS WITH DESIGNS AT BACK.

t is very rare to find all the marks with which backs of cards are embellished to form the de-, in the same identical place.

he slightest examination will prove that the gns are not always the same distance from the es of the card.

he maker and the honest player do not find this fact affects them; but the Greek makes profit of it, and uses this peculiarity for the pose of cheating.

fter the third or fourth hand, he is able, by means, to recognize a certain number of cards. he Greek who practices the trick often makes own cards, and places as he pleases the dis-guishing marks.

uppose, for instance, that the design represents umber of lozenges placed one on the other, Greek arranges that the lozenge placed near edge of the card should be entire for the ace; n nearer and cut in four for the king, half for queen, and three-quarters for the knave.

When the top edge of the card, the lozenge, by ilar alterations, represents spades, hearts, clubs, diamonds, the Greek will have succeeded in king the principal cards required for piquet.

Chance alone will have appeared to produce these nge alterations, and no one will have the right uspecting any trickery.

CHAPTER XXII.

SPOTTING THE BACKS OF CARDS.

The following trick yields nothing to the mo successful abbreviations of shorthand, for by t use of a point you may recognize any one of t thirty-two cards used at piquet.

Suppose the design at the back of a card consis of circles, or any other form arranged regularly the ordinary way. See Fig. 21.

The large circle at the top of the card on t left represents a heart; the second, in descendin a diamond; the third, a club; the fourth, a spade.

If, in addition to one of these circles, which a naturally placed by the design of the card, t Greek adds another little mark, he indicates t class of the card.

That mark should be placed in one of the di sions marked in Fig. 22; it represents, if placed the top, an ace; to the right, a king; the third, queen; the fourth, a knave, and thus up to seven.

It is, of course, understood that it requires b one mark, as in Fig. 21, to that which is joined the third point, to indicate, after the principles have set forth, an eight of clubs.

After my explanation, the reader, I am qu sure, has already made up his mind about car with ornamental backs.

"When that is the case," he says, "I will on play with plain, white-back cards, and avoid bei cheated."

Unfortunately, cards with white backs lend emselves to cheating as much as the others. I ıve already shown that, in speaking of stained rds; and here is another instance.

In the year 1849, M. B——, *judge d'instruction* the tribunal of the Seine, requested me to ex-

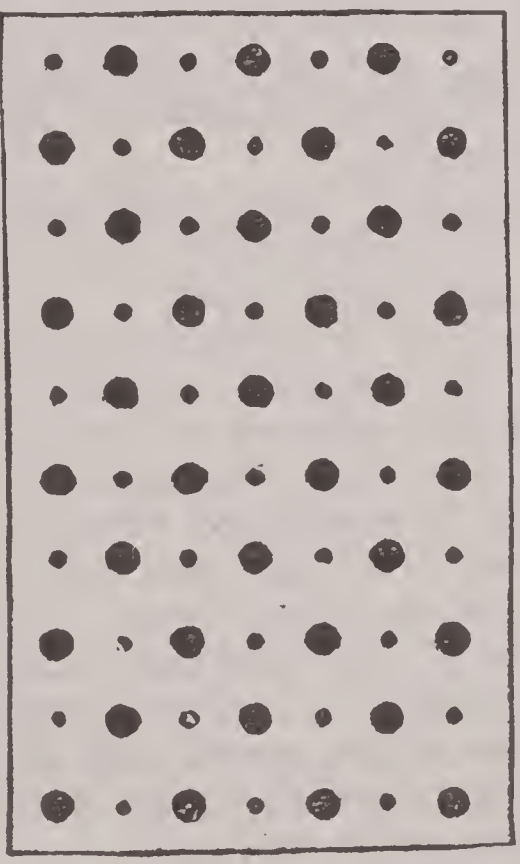


Fig. 21.

Fig. 22.

mine and verify one hundred and fifty packs of ards seized in the possession of a man whose ante-edents were far from being as white as the cards ıe used.

These cards were all white backs, and this peculiarity had defeated, until now, the most minute nvestigation.

It was impossible for the keenest eye to detect

the slightest alteration, the smallest mark, and the all appeared to be cards of the best make.

I passed nearly fifteen days examining the card with my eyes alone and with the assistance of powerful magnifying glass; studying the forms an the imperceptible differences of each one of th cards in the one hundred and fifty packs. I coul detect nothing, and, tired out, I ended by sharin the opinion of other experts who had preceded m in the examination.

"Undoubtedly," I said, with annoyance, throw ing the cards one night on the table, "there is noth ing wrong with these cards."

All at once, on the brilliant back of a card an near one of the angles, I thought I noticed a dul point which had escaped me till that instant. approached, the point disappeared. But, strang circumstance! it reappeared when I retreated.

"What luck!" I exclaimed with enthusiasm, a an idea flashed across my mind. "I have it! Yes it must be so! it is a distinctive mark!"

And, following a leading principle used i trickery, I convinced myself that all the cards had a mark which, placed at certain determined places, indicated their value and suit.

This was the plan:

It is necessary to suppose the cards to be divided vertically in eight parts, and horizontally in four, as in Fig. 23. The one set of marks indicated the value of the cards, and the others their suits. The mark is placed where the divisions intersect. Such is the plan; practice does the rest.

As to the way of making this mysterious mark of which I have already spoken, I must be allowed to keep silence; because my purpose, as I have said before, is to expose cheating and not to make cheats.

is enough to say that seen closely, the mark lts into the white of the card; and that at a tance, the reflection of the light makes the card pear brilliant, while the mark remains dull.

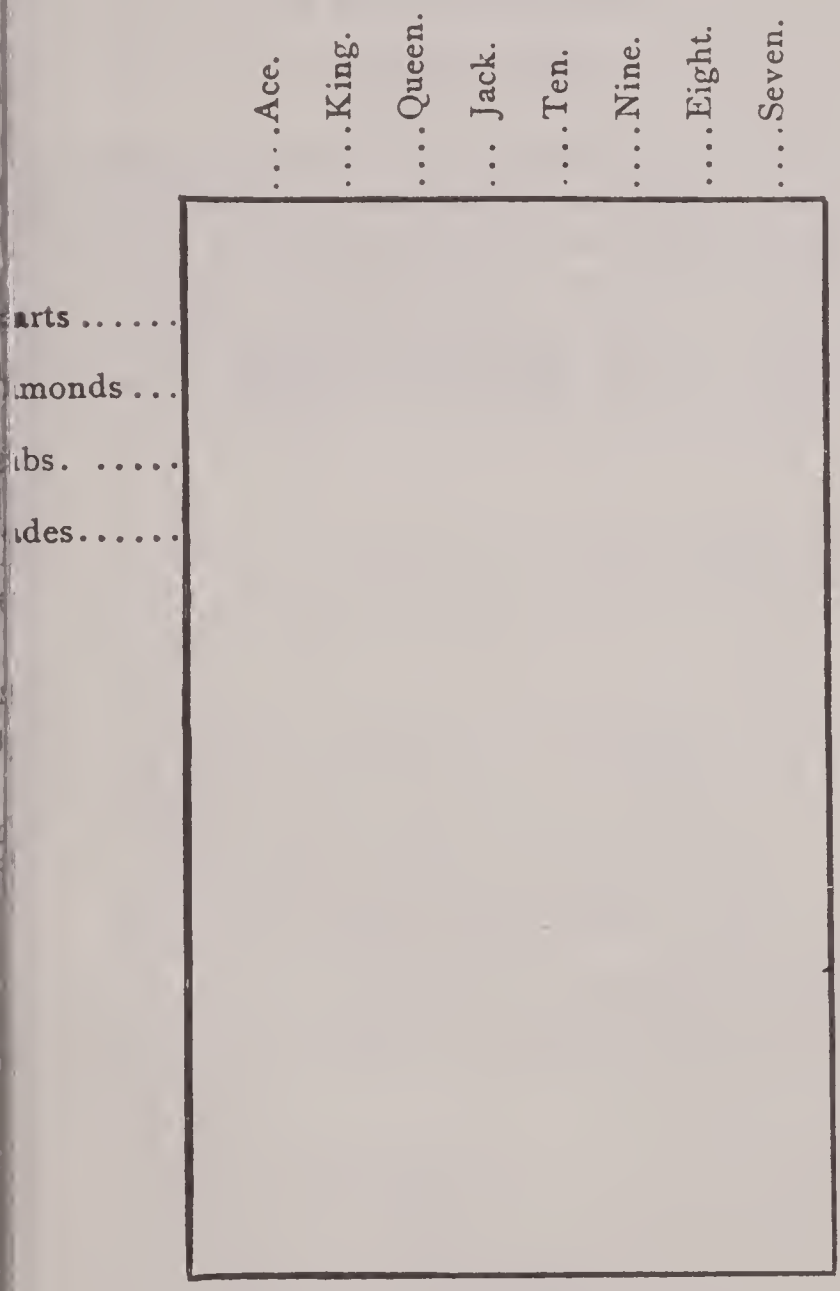


Fig. 23.

At the first glance, it appears very difficult to alize the division to which is attached an isolated

mark on the back of a card. In spite of this, wi
a little attention, we may judge by the mark I ha
used as an example in the card represented
Fig. 23, that it cannot belong to the second nor
the fourth vertical division; and then by inducti
reasoning, we can understand that the mark is al
in the second horizontal division.

It therefore represents the queen of diamonds.

We must grasp the fact that a Greek, with thes
cards, risks, I will not say his honor, but his li
erty against fortune; and that, by reason of th
importance of the stake, he must make seriou
study of an art on which everything depends.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CHAPLET.

The chaplet is an arrangement of cards made ording to certain words of a phrase committed memory. In other words, it is using the memory the purpose of cheating.

There are chaplets used more or less ingenious; best are those which offer to the mind some ning, a thought, or only an agreeable com-ation.

One of the old chaplets is that formed of two in verses, of which each word indicates one of fifty-two cards of the pack.

This is it:

Unus, quinque, novem, famulus, sex, quatuor, duo,
Rex, septem, octo, fœmina, trina, decem.

Which may be translated as follows:

Ace, five, nine, knave, six, four, two,
King, seven, eight, queen, three, ten.

These thirteen cards are, in addition, ranged in der of suits as follows: spades, heart, clubs, dia-nds, as below:

1. Ace of spades.
2. Five of hearts.
3. Nine of clubs.
4. Knave of diamonds.
5. Six of spades.

And thus in order, following the order of the aplet and suits to the last.

The following is a phrase or chaplet for a gam of thirty-two cards, called piquet:

The king eighteen is not worth his queens.

Which means:

The king, ten, eight, nine, knave, ace, seven, queen.

Thus, as in the preceding example, the card are classed in the order indicated above. Only, a the end of the chaplet, after the queen, instead o placing the suits for the king which follows, it i arranged that the king and the queen should be o the same color. Without that precaution, fou kings of spades, four tens of hearts, etc., would b required. The following example will make thi clear:

Arrangement of a chaplet of thirty-two cards.

1.	King of spades.	17.	King of clubs.
2.	Ten of hearts.	18.	Ten of diamonds.
3.	Eight of clubs.	19.	Eight of spades.
4.	Nine of diamonds.	20.	Nine of hearts.
5.	Knave of spades.	21.	Knave of clubs.
6.	Ace of hearts.	22.	Ace of diamonds.
7.	Seven of clubs.	23.	Seven of spades.
8.	Queen of diamonds.	24.	Queen of hearts.
9.	King of diamonds.	25.	King of hearts.
10.	Ten of spades.	26.	Ten of clubs.
11.	Eight of hearts.	27.	Eight of diamonds.
12.	Nine of clubs.	28.	Nine of spades.
13.	Knave of diamonds.	29.	Knave of hearts.
14.	Ace of spades.	30.	Ace of clubs.
15.	Seven of hearts.	31.	Seven of diamonds.
16.	Queen of clubs.	32.	Queen of spades.

It must be mentioned that the cut in this arrangement of the cards, however often it may be repeated, does not in any degree affect the order of the cards.

When a Greek has substituted one pack of cards for another, and has made a false shuffle which does

not alter their position, he can easily learn all the cards in his adversary's hand by those he has in his own hand.

Thus, for example, at ecarte, if he has in his hand:

The eight of hearts,
The nine of clubs,
The queen of clubs,
The king of clubs,
The ten of diamonds,

he knows that his opponent has:

The king of diamonds,
The ten of spades,
The knave of diamonds,
The ace of spades,
The seven of hearts.

The trump will be the eight of spades; and knowing all the cards following that, he can ask or hold, according to circumstances.

At the games of baccarat and lansquenet this trick is most dangerous and easy. The packs are changed before beginning, and although they may be really shuffled, it takes time for the cards to lose the form they are first arranged in. Some cards may be out of order, but the Greek can count for some time on his knowledge of the card to follow by that which precedes it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE MARKING RING.

The Greek sometimes elevates trickery into an art; the instrument I am about to describe is a proof of it. If the ring had not been imagined for swindling purposes, one could not help admiring it.

The ring represented in Fig. 24 is called *trepan;* it is hollow, and forms a reservoir of very thin ink. This liquid is capable of flowing from an opening made in point A, if this does not stop the issue. It acts as tap to the reservoir.

Fig. 24.

Now, as this point (A) is hidden within the hand, the Greek can in an instant mark certain cards in a way that he alone can detect, under the eyes of his opponent.

These marks, according to their position, can also, as I have before explained, indicate the kind and value of the cards.

The Greek also uses the marking ring for the purpose of cheating at dominoes. In that case the ring is massive, and the inside is furnished with a very sharp steel point.

We can readily comprehend that the Greek,

either while he holds the dominoes in his hand or while he is moving them on the table, can easily prick or mark them in a way to render them recognizable.

I will add that the point of the ring, although very sharp, is dealt with in a manner to cause it to mark so lightly as not to arouse suspicion.

Only the trained observation of the astute Greek could detect such slight touches.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SNUFF-BOX.

While dealing with objects of art, I will mention another which has its merits.

The reader will hardly believe that a snuff-box may become a tool for cheating; however, such is the case.

The Greek, in beginning to play, carelessly lays on the table a snuff-box, on the top of which is a little medallion of the size of a shilling, covering a miniature. It is the portrait of a lady executed with great art.

The players' observation is naturally directed to this object, and sometimes one of them will take it into his hand to examine, and then pass it on to be admired by the others.

When the game has begun, the Greek takes a pinch of snuff, that action affords him the opportunity of taking up his box and replacing it in front of him.

But, while doing so, he presses an invisible spring which substitutes for the miniature a little convex glass, which assists him greatly in his cheating.

When the Greek is dealing, as he hands out the cards, those given to his opponents are reflected in the little mirror and are therefore visible to the sharper.

From time to time the Greek replaces the mirror by the medallion and politely offers a pinch of snuff to his victims.

CHAPTER XXVI.

APPLICATION OF THE PRECEDING PRINCIPLES.

Strokes of Trickery. Disposition of the Cards.

It is a positive fact that a clever Greek can, by the aid of the rules I have set forth, win at all games by giving to himself winning cards.

But it must not be believed that the Athenian gentlemen are so awkward as to present their tricks in the form of conjuring. They would in that case be soon found out.

These intelligent rascals economize their resources and hasten slowly; they do not as a rule follow a fixed system, and their talent, added to a slight touch of trickery, assures them fortune's smile.

Generally the Greek modifies the tricks employed according to present circumstances. The cleverer his adversary is at play, the less necessary he finds it to cheat. If he is playing with a clumsy fellow, the Greek, recognizing his superiority to his adversary, plays honestly, reserving his cunning wiles for a more worthier occasion. Nevertheless, as it often happens that fortune justifies the vulgar proverb, "full hands for the fool," Mr. Sharper keeps on the defensive, and is always ready to shoot his poisoned shafts.

For the above reasons it is impossible to give a description of the intricate organization of a sharper's play; but as I desire to instruct the reader on his rascally maneuvers I will present by example one of the tricks of the "lofty school,"

as people say at the circus. It is the top tric used at piquet.

In this trick, for which the preparations are mac before the eyes of the opponent and without an preliminary precaution, the Greek may win th game the first hand by one hundred and sixty-thre points.

In reading the following details, one may reali the different manipulations which serve as found tion to all kinds of cheating at cards; and I tru the reader will derive from the exposure the know edge, which is indeed the real object of this boo that it is dangerous to trust large sums of mon to chances that may be and are so easily controlle

CHAPTER XXVII.

TRICK AT PIQUET.

) In which the Greek repeeks, and defeats his opponent.

This trick at piquet dates from the last century. was invented by the sharper Comes, who exeted it very cleverly, even with bandaged eyes.

It is from this interesting game that people have awn all the tricks at piquet since performed by ajurers as an amusing experiment. I will describe first in the form of an introduction, to assist the ader in understanding the trick spoken of in the t chapter.

In taking up the pack, the sharper, by an asmed awkwardness, muddles the cards in a way make a great many of the court cards face each ier. That affords him the opportunity of returng the cards to their right position; and under the etext of doing that, he places under the pack a and eight of each kind, a king, and three aces.

Once in possession of these twelve cards, he bends corner of each with one pressure of his hand, ich leaves a curve which he can instantly detect. ee ch. xx.)

He then hands the pack to his opponent to uffle.

While that is being done, he has his eyes banged by his opponent—a precaution which does prevent his seeing through the openings left by prominence of the nose.

He then takes the pack, and, while appearing to uffle the cards, he is able to find the marked cards

and place them in the places necessary to enabl him to win the game, as shall be explained in th next paragraph.

Some conjurers, instead of bending the card content themselves, while apparently trifling wit them, with passing the twelve cards already d scribed below the others, and after that arrangin them in the desired way by executing a false shu fle.

(b) In which the Greek repeeks and defeats his op ponent, although the cards were shuffled by the latter.

As I address persons acquainted with the gam of piquet, I have no need to enter into details.

The Greek must, in playing his first trick, secur a ten, six major, a ten, four, an ace and a ten, an four kings, which we will represent thus:

1. Ace of spades.
2. King of spades.
3. Queen of spades.
4. Knave of spades.
5. Ten of spades.
6. Nine of spades.
7. Ace of hearts.
8. Ace of diamonds.
9. Ace of clubs.
10. King of hearts.
11. King of diamonds.
12. King of clubs.

It is necessary, in addition, that his adversar should hold the cards at the beginning of the gam when it is in playing the first hand that the captur of the twelve cards should be made.

This is how the difficult operation is effected:

It is the custom before a game begins that eac of the players should cut for deal.

The Greek, in shuffling the cards, has, with rapid glance, found one that he places under th pack, and, using the trick that I have describe (Fig. 9, ch. vi., p. 174), he makes the bridge.

"Let us see," he says, placing the pack on the table, "who deals?"

He cuts first in the bridge where the ace is, and it is very rare that his opponent cuts another.

"My deal," he says; "shuffle them, please. We play for one hundred and fifty."

The first deal is not important; the Greek leaves to chance the distribution of the cards. He is sure that his opponent will not win the game the first hand, and occupies himself with the plan of getting possession of the cards previously named.

Twelve cards are dealt to him by his adversary, and five others are reserved.

It is probable that out of these seventeen cards he may find a certain number of those required.

Now, at all price, he must avoid the chance of these cards being possessed by his adversary, and he keeps them near him by the following trick:

For this purpose he places with the cards withdrawn those he fears to lose; he then puts on his right a little pile of cards, on which he places successively, without affection, the aces, kings, and spades that he can take from his opponent.

Suppose, when the hand is played, he has only secured six of the cards he needs; the following is the plan adopted to take the other six from the rest of the pack:

During the cutting, he leaves purposely the cards he has taken on the table, faces upwards; and as it is for him to shuffle them, he turns those of his adversary in the same way.

Profiting by the moment when the latter is marking his points, he chooses, in lifting the packs, the cards he requires, and places them with the six he already had at the bottom of the pack.

If my reader is not familiar with card tricks, he

doubtless thinks all these maneuvers long and difficult. It is a mere nothing.

This apparently long explanation is due to the fact that in conjuring tricks tedious descriptions are required to make short operations clear. But that is not the point; my sole desire is to be comprehended, and it is for that reason that I have labored my account of the manipulation employed.

The Greek having, in the twinkling of an eye, placed the twelve winning cards under the pack, so arranges them that they shall come to his hand when dealt.

In appearing to shuffle, he makes successively pass on the pack:

1. Three cards from bottom of pack.
2. Three cards taken indifferently from middle of others.
3. Three cards taken from bottom of pack.
4. Three cards taken indifferently.
5. Three cards taken from the bottom.
6. Three cards taken indifferently.

This is followed by a sham shuffle, sham cut, and the arrangement by threes.

The reader can see that of the twelve cards placed under the pack, nine must come into the hands of the Greek in dealing; the three last reach him from those placed aside.

He has now in his hand:

1. Ten, six of spades.
2. Ten, four, ace.
3. Ten, four, king;

with which he wins the game by trumping his opponent.

This victory produces one hundred and sixty-three points.

The trio of cards and their arrangement just

described is a specimen of what a trickster can do; but it is necessary, as I have before pointed out, that the Greek should never run the risk of giving himself too good a hand. He is satisfied with ten, four, or king, or even with a simple *quinte*. The arrangement of the trio becomes then a very simple affair.

(*c*) *Subtraction and Substitution.*

Formerly it was customary at piquet, when the dealing was accomplished, to divide the rest of the cards in two unequal parts, and place one across the other.

The eight cards are now placed in one lot.

This new arrangement gives occasion for a trick which, although very daring, is not less difficult to detect when it is not known. Once suspected, it is a different thing.

This rascality is done as follows:

The Greek, in dealing the cards, takes care to give himself three extra cards. He then intentionally places the reserve cards nearer to himself than to his adversary.

The latter does not notice the subtraction of three additional cards, because he does not pay attention; and it is, besides, the moment players are occupied in examining and arranging their cards.

While his opponent is thus occupied, the Greek rapidly takes the three worst cards in his hand, and places them in the manner already described on the reserved ones, and pushes them closer to his adversary.

The movement is apparently so natural that the trick is not noticed.

We can easily understand the advantage drawn by the Greek from his frauds. He not only gets rid of his own bad cards, but he passes them to his opponent.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

TRICK AT ECARTE.

The King and a Flush.

Before beginning this article on ecarte, I will point out an error widely spread amongst players.

People say, in speaking of a Greek whose cheating powers have been proved; "That man turns up the king whenever he wishes."

That is a mistake; a clever Greek never commits that imprudence. He is perfectly well aware that if he turns up a king too often, he will awaken suspicion, and therefore only scores a point, while by keeping it in his hand he gains a double advantage.

For the same reason, an experienced card-sharper does not give himself so complete a hand as that before described, because such a combination of trumps could not fail to awaken reflections by which he could not profit.

The following trick should also only be considered as an example of the organization of cheating at ecarte:

The Arrangement of the Pack.

The Greek, in turning over the cards with seeming carelessness, has boldly passed under the cards a ten six major, of which the king occupies the top place.

This done, nothing is easier for him to do than to place these cards in a way to make them fall to his share.

To do this, in pretending to shuffle, he makes successively pass into the pack:

1. Four cards below (good).
2. Three cards in the middle (bad).
3. Two cards below (good).
4. Two cards in the middle (bad).

This manipulation finished, he makes a false cut, as indicated in the first chapter, and deals.

Contrary to his principles, he returns the king, and holds in his hands a sequence to the queen of trumps.

We have seen from the preceding tricks that it is necessary for the Greek, in beginning to play, to place above and below the pack a certain number of cards, which he classes according to the order indicated by the deal.

This arrangement is made, as I have before observed, in pretending to shuffle, and nearly always in the midst of an animated conversation on the playing of the last hand.

The Greek masters the trick so perfectly, that he accomplishes it quite imperceptibly.

I have said that he does not amuse himself by using conjuring tricks, and satisfies himself with some good cards, of which his skill makes the best use.

In that case his plan is very simple, and is as follows:

A first hand has been played; the Greek has to shuffle; he takes the eleven cards from the table, according to rule.

But in lifting them, he has known how, by a turn of the hand, to separate those he sees of one color and place them aside, while the others are laid under.

Suppose the cards picked by him are:

1. The king of hearts.
2. The ace of hearts.
3. The ten of hearts.
4. The seven of hearts.

In order that the last of these cards shall be the one turned up, and that the others should be included in this hand, the Greek has only to place on these the first cards to hand to complete the number eleven.

He does this easily by a false shuffle.

After which he breaks the cut, by the bridge or by other means as shown in first chapter, and deals.

The Greek has thus given himself the king, the ace, and ten of hearts. As to the two other cards, he trusts to chance that they will prove more or less favorable.

To prevent this trick being successfully performed, it is necessary, when one suspects the good faith of an opponent, to watch the taking up of the cards, and to especially examine that those which have been used in the previous hand do not reappear in his hand.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LANSQUENT CONCEALED CARDS.

This trick is the simplest and at the same time the most dangerous of all those described in this work; and the execution is, unfortunately, very easy.

It is a question of the Greek placing in the pack, at the moment he holds it, a series of cards called *portee,* which should lead to several opportunities of remaking.

These hidden cards are composed of ten cards, and are arranged, for example, in the following manner:

1. Queen.
2. Queen.
3. Ten.
4. Seven.
5. Ten.
6. Nine.
7. Nine.
8. Ace.
9. Eight.
10. Ace.

When the *portee* is exhausted, the Greek passes the hand that contains the others.

This is how the *portees* are placed on the sharper's person to enable him to easily take them.

To understand this trick, it is necessary to take off the Greek's coat. As in the figure below, two pockets, called *costieres,* are made in the waistcoat, on the left side.

When the Greek waits his turn to take the hand, he negligently leans on the table, and in that position his fingers find themselves as near as possible to his *portees.*

At the right moment he grasps the concealed cards, takes them out, as described in chapter ix., and places them on the pack.

The action is made invisible, because the Greek wears a coat buttoned high, so that by the assistance

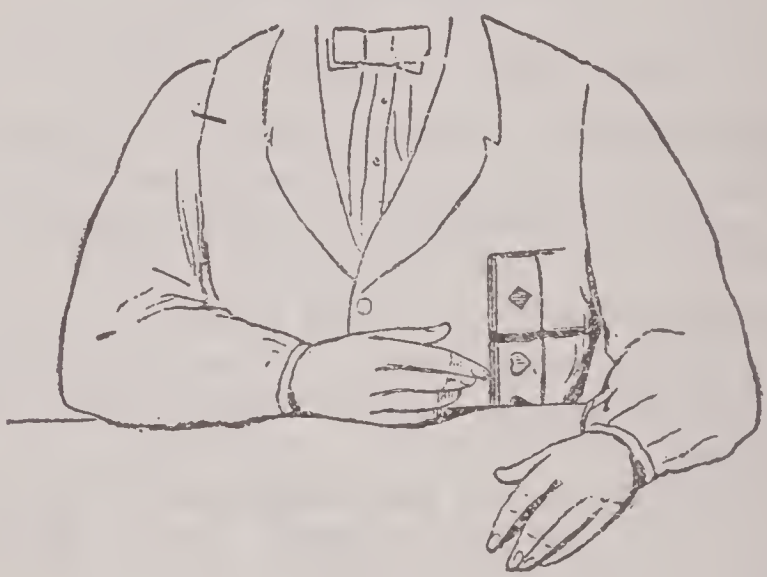


Fig. 25.

of the opening below he introduces his hand, which is completely hidden.

Some Greeks are clever enough to take from the pack some cards, which they place in their *costieres* for the next hand; others, again, keep them cleverly hidden in the hand, to place them at an opportune moment in the pack.

The cards, by this plan, are not increased.

CHAPTER XXX.

OBSERVATION ON GAMES FOR FOUR PLAYERS.

One would doubtless think that in games for four a Greek could not arrange his plans for cheating, because the cards he must deal are taken up and shuffled by another person.

I must recall to the reader's recollection that in a certain chapter of this work I have already given him a summary explanation on this point; I will now complete it.

At the game of bouillote, for instance, the Greek unites himself with an accomplice whom he places near him. While collecting and shuffling the cards, his one arranges a trickery for the next hand.

The trick cannot arouse suspicion, because it is not the Greek dealing who performs it, but his confederate.

The two gentlemen, in addition, pretend to be strangers to each other.

Besides this trick, and without the necessity of an accomplice, there are other—for all games for four players—artifices and ruses to be employed by Greeks, and which are all drawn from the general principles which I have named.

Another Observation.

I have sometimes heard it said that it is impossible for a Greek to exercise his industry in high circles, because he would be so keenly watched.

Doubtless a Greek in a large reunion—we will suppose for ecarte—with vividly interested specta-

tors, would hesitate to break the cut, draw the cards, etc. But are not there other ruses that he can employ without fear of detection?

Marked cards, for instance. Cannot he arrange with one of the servants, with whom he will share the spoil, on condition of his handing him the cards before they are used by the players?

Is not telegraphing also equally practicable under the severest scrutiny?

Besides, to repeat what I said at the commencement of this work, the Greek of fashionable life possesses a tact and intelligence which places him in sympathy with his surroundings, and when he decides to cheat he does so with excellent conditions of success. If he does not hazard conjuring tricks before many observers he knows very well how to use them in quiet games and with players whose perceptive powers he has carefully analyzed and weighed.

Far from me, however, is the thought that there are scoundrels engaged in play everywhere. I believe, on the contrary, that there are certain clubs and societies that have never included a rascally Greek. But is even that fact a reason why, sooner or later, a Greek should not exercise there his cheating tricks?

CHAPTER XXXI.

AMUSING TRICKERIES.

In the preceding chapters I have cited examples of serious tricks performed by Greeks. I will now present to the reader a series of tricks which I term amusing, because they are like those of a conjurer who, while amusing the spectator, at the same time shows him how easy it is to be the dupe of such displays.

Let us return to the preceding trick at piquet, which we will now expose in a more pleasant manner.

The conjurer has in his hand, we said:

1. Ten, six of spades.
2. Ten, four, ace.
3. Ten, four, king.

The opponent has the cards; it is for him to speak: he announces ten, six, queen; because having power to see sequence in three suits, it is probable that one will succeed.

"Six cards," he says.

"What are they?"

"Fifty-four."

"That is not enough. Is that all you declare?"

"Yes, because it is probable that my three queens are no good."

"That is so!"

You then place on the table your ten six major, and say:

"Sixteen and six twenty-two, and ten four kings, (showing them), "ninety-six, and fourteen ace one

hundred and ten.'' These two fourteens have been kept in the left hand.

I should here parenthetically give an explanation necessary to the comprehension of what follows. While continuing the exposition and the counting of a game of piquet, we are secretly preparing a trick at ecarte to be accomplished after this game.

Let us resume the account we have left; one hundred and ten point, we said; hundred and eleven, you say in taking the nine of spades of your ten six to place it on one side, hundred and twelve, in placing ten above, and, continuing to count, you do the same for the four other cards, with the difference that, when you are at the king, you place the ace before him, so that it shall be found the last of the pack.

In finishing your count, you place on the six cards the three kings and the three aces, which make one hundred and twenty-three, which added to forty for trump make one hundred and sixty-three.

The pack not being used, the cards unshuffled, it is very easy, with the little preparatory task I have described, to arrange the following trick.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ECARTE.

Pleasant Game of Ecarte.

After the disposition of the cards shown in the preceding trick, you have in hand six spades, three kings, and three aces; these you place on the pack.

Then, with apparent indifference, you take three cards from those placed aside that you have near you, and you put them under the two top cards; then, by a false shuffle, you make pass on the top two cards from the bottom of the pack.

This arrangement results in the following order of the cards:

Two indifferent cards.

Two spades.

Three indifferent cards.

Four spades, of which a king should serve as turning card.

Then following three kings and three aces.

The manipulation of the cards indicated above is made while talking, and without declared intention of continuing to play.

Then you place the pack on the table.

"See," you say, "the danger there is in playing cards. A Greek talks pleasantly, and, by the means you have described, empties your purse. Let us see, do not you know a game for two? Ecarte, for instance."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, then, let us play at ecarte."

They take the arranged pack, a false shuffle fol-

lows, then a false cut, and the cards are dealt.

"I turn up king," you say; "here it is, and my hand is full of trumps."

You then throw down, one after the other, the five cards, saying, trump, trump," etc.

Continuation of the Game. Another pleasant Trick.

"The flush and the king, I mark three points; you make the cards" (you hand the cards to your opponent, and at the same time take five or six cards which you conceal in the hand, as shown in ch. viii., Fig. 13).

Your opponent shuffles the cards, and in order that he should not perceive the diminution of the pack, you amuse him with an animated conversation of this kind:

"Have you, sir, any taste for conjuring?"

"I believe not."

"So much the worse, because I would have shown you a trick."

"Show it me all the same."

"With pleasure; but, before doing so, it will be necessary for you to practice for a year at breaking the cut," etc., etc.

Your opponent then devotes himself to cutting and shuffling. In taking the cards he has given you, you place on them those you have taken, having care to hold all these for an instant pressed together.

"But, sir," you exclaim, "tell me what game are we playing?"

"At ecarte, it appears to me."

"How! at ecarte! Then why do you give me so many cards?" You then spread all your cards out side by side.

"Who deals badly loses the hand," you say, casting a rapid glance at the cards displayed.

You have noticed in the eleven or twelve cards the dominant suit, that I will suppose to be hearts; you choose four, and as amongst these cards, as the reader will recall, are the three kings and three aces, you join the king and ace of hearts to those four cards, and pass them under the pack.

After that, by a manipulation similar to that indicated for the piquet trick, you place on the pack, while pretending to shuffle:

1. Four cards below.
2. Three indifferent cards in the middle.
3. Two cards below.
4. Two indifferent cards.

The pack should then be thus arranged:

Eleven cards prepared, viz.:

1. Two false cards.
2. Two hearts.
3 Three false cards.
4. Three hearts.
5. A heart for turn-up.

You make a false shuffle, then a false cut, and deal the cards.

"I just now turned up the king," you say to yourself while dealing the cards. "I will keep it this time in the pack."

You mark and score the point, and the game is won.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

TRICK AT ECARTE.

In which you make your opponent win.

As I have said before, while turning over the cards you choose a ten six major of any suit; these you place under the pack, and you make pass successively above in the order following:

1. A card below.
2. Three false cards in the middle.
3. Three false cards below.
4. Two false cards in the middle.
5. Two cards below.

A false shuffle and cut. Deal the cards first by twos, then by threes.

In the arrangement of your cards, the king must not be placed to make it the turn-up card.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ANOTHER TRICK AT ECARTE.

In which the opponent loses a bet he made sure of winning on seeing part of the dealer's hand.

Place on the pack eleven cards, viz.:

1. Queen of hearts.
2. Ace of hearts.
3. King of hearts.
4. Knave of hearts.
5. Ten of hearts.
6. Nine of hearts.
7. King of diamonds.
8. Seven of hearts.
9. Seven of clubs.
10. Seven of spades.
11. Eight of hearts.

Make afterwards a false shuffle, a false cut, and deal by twos and threes.

The following will be the division of the cards:

THE DEALER.	THE ADVERSARY.
King of hearts.	Queen of hearts.
Knave of hearts.	Ace of hearts.
Seven of hearts.	Ten of hearts.
Seven of spades.	Nine of hearts.
Seven of clubs.	King of diamonds.

Turn-up card, eight of hearts.

"Good heavens," you will exclaim, in displaying on the table the three sevens of your hand, "what miserable cards!" You take care, however, not to show your king and knave of hearts.

"Nevertheless," you add, "I have a chance, and it is not impossible for me to win the game."

It is certain that your opponent with so good a hand will fall into the trap, and bet that he will

win. He plays confidently; but whatever is his manner of playing he cannot avoid losing three points of the game, because two of his trumps must fall on your small cards, and your seven of trumps may parry the attack of his king of diamonds; you having in hand, to finish the game, what is vulgarly called the *fourchette*.

CHAPTER XXXV.

BACCARAT.

Game of Baccarat profitable to the banker.

You place under the pack sixteen cards in the ollowing order:

A nine.
A court card.
A nine.
A court card.
A nine.
6. A court card.
7. A nine.
8. A court card.
9. An eight.
10. An ace.
11. An eight.
12. An ace.
13. An eight.
14. An ace.
15. An eight.
16. An ace.

Arrangement.

Pass successively under the pack sixteen times:

1. The last card.
2. Two false cards.
3. The last card.
4. Two false cards, in this order.

False cut and deal one at a time.

The banker will have at first at each hand nine or ineteen and gain thus on the bridges at right and ;ft.

This demonstration of amusing trickery at bac- arat is only given as a specimen. The reader will ;e that a Greek would not dare to win so many mes, and especially by first hands.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WHIST.

Game of Whist in which the adversaries lose every trick.

You place on the pack thirteen cards of the same suit, and, in order to arrange them by a false shuffle, you adopt the following plan:

1. Having taken thirteen cards in the right hand, make the last slip on to the packet of thirty-nine others that you hold in your left hand.

2. Place rapidly that card with the three following on the packet in the right hand.

3. Now make the last of that packet glide on that in the left hand, and proceed as before to make it pass with the three others on the top of the pack.

Continue thus until the packet in the left hand is exhausted.

This false shuffle is a perfect illusion.

False cut and deal.

With three trumps in the hand the dealer must inevitably make the odd trick.

Game of Whist in which each player has thirteen cards of one suit, which does not prevent the dealer making the trick.

All the cards should be arranged by spades, hearts, clubs, diamonds, without there being any necessity to distinguish them according to value.

Make a false shuffle, and give them to be cut ithout fear of seeing your combination upset.

Deal them singly.

After the deal each one will have a sequence of irteen cards. Only that of the dealer will have l trumps.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

BOUILLOTTE.

A Square Game.

Place under the pack four similar cards, otherwise called a square game.

Then, to classify them, pass in succession on the pack.

1. The two last cards.
2. Three false cards.
3. The last card.
4. Three false cards.
5. The last card.
6. Three false cards.

False shuffle, false cut, and deal.

You have four similar cards in your hand, while your adversary has only those given him by chance; which, in any case, cannot equal your hand.

Game of Bouillotte, where one wins after forcing his adversary to play.

Place under the pack thirteen cards, viz.:

1. Four nines.
2. Three queens.
3. Three kings.
4. Three aces.

Then place on the pack:

1. The two last cards.

2. The third, the sixth, and the ninth before he last.

3. The last.

4. The second, the fourth, and the sixth before he last.

5. The four last.

False shuffle, false cut, and deal.

Each player possesses four cards of one kind, which inspires him with the expectation of winning.

It is not, therefore, astonishing that each one lays; but as the dealer has a sequence of four, e has the advantage over his adversaries.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

BEZIQUE.

A curious Game of Bezique, in which, with one pack of thirty-two cards, you make by the first hand five hundred and thirty-two points, while the opponent makes none.

This game is very amusing, and deserves to be well displayed. And we purpose doing so after the cards are cut.

Place below the pack seventeen cards in the following order:

1. Ten of hearts.
2. Ten of clubs.
3. Ten of diamonds.
4. King of hearts.
5. King of clubs.
6. King of diamonds.
7. Ace of hearts.
8. Ace of clubs.
9. Ace of diamonds.
10. Ace of spades.
11. King of spades.
12. Queen of spades.
13. Knave of spades.
14. Ten of spades.
15. Nine of spades.
16. Seven of spades.
17. Eight of spades.

Arrangement under pretence of shuffling.

Pass successively on the pack:

1. The five last cards (spades).
2. Three indifferent cards.
3. Three cards from below (spades).
4. Three indifferent cards.

The above arrangement should serve for the dealing of the two packs; it remains now to arrange

the cards placed on one side in such a way that by a successive drawing, the cards you require to win the game with will fall into your hand. For that purpose it is necessary to alter the form of false shuffle and continue thus:

1. Take in your right hand the fourteen top cards which have been arranged on the pack.

2. Hold in the left hand the rest of the pack between the thumb and the four fingers; then cause to glide successively under the packet in the right hand:

1. With the thumb of the left hand, the card at the top of the packet.

2. With the four fingers of the same hand, the card at bottom of the same packet.

3. With the thumb of the left hand, the card above, and in succession the rest of the packet in same order.

To manage the false shuffle, that is to be assured you are not misled, the pack should terminate by a ten.

The cards should therefore be in the following order:

1. Three false cards.
2. Three good cards.
3. Three false cards.
4. Three good cards.
5. Seven of spades (the turn-up card).
6. Eight of spades.
7. False card.
8. Ace of hearts.
9. False card.

And in this order for the aces, the three kings and the three tens, which should each be separated by indifferent cards.

False cut and deal by threes.

"When bezique was first invented," you say to your opponent, "people played five hundred with one hand of piquet, and that was in defiance of the small number of cards, of which each player only had six in his hand.

"Let us play in that way, to be completely within the rules of the game."

You deal: three, three, three, three, you say, and turn up a seven, and mark ten points. 10

The dealer has in his hand ten six major in spades.

"Allow me to mention, sir, before looking at my hand, that whatever be the card you may please to play, I cut it by the nine of trumps, in order to mark a marriage in that suit."

You take your hand.

"Just so; I cut and mark forty.

"I now take from the reserve cards eight of trumps, with which I cut to mark my two hundred and fifty. 250

"I still require two hundred points to win. Let me see! What would be the most rapid plan? One hundred for ace would be the thing. I take an ace."...You play ace in order to be the first to draw, and at each draw you say: then another...etc....then at last the fourth...."This must be the ace of...." (As each ace has been named before drawing, you can name the suit of the last by that you have left).

"I score one hundred. 100

"Let us see now about eighty of kings.

"Yes, here is one...and another...etc... then the fourth. I mark eighty. 80

"Kindly note, sir, that I informed you that I could score five hundred without your making one point; now, if you had broken them, you could count. I will take them to avoid giving you that trouble." (You draw them successively.)

"The turn-up is by right yours; but in order that it may not injure me, I play trump to take it from you, and I remain master of the game."

Thus, therefore, ten for the last and forty for the break make fifty, which, united to the four hundred and eighty, make five hundred and thirty.

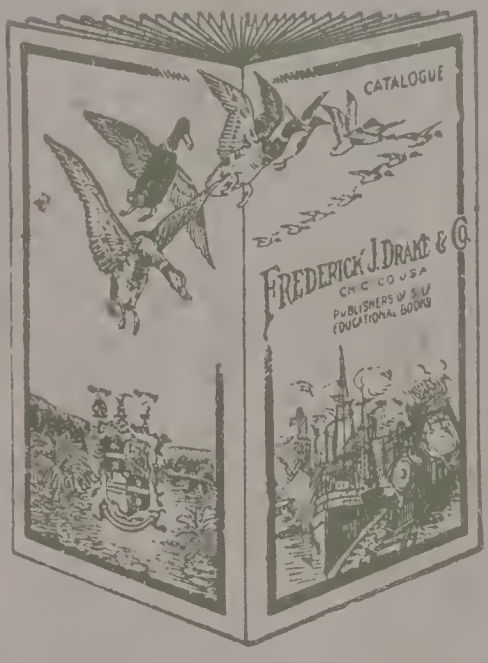
You should understand that during this game you must win each hand to be always in the condition of drawing.

If this game is difficult to execute, it has the advantage of being very brilliant and of producing a certain and surprising effect.

Books That Really Teach

you the things you want to know, and in a simple, practical way that you can understand

Our illustrated catalogue, which will be sent you free upon request, tells all about the Practical Mechanical Books for Home Study that we publish.



There are popular priced books on the operation of trains and station work, practical mechanical drawing and machine designing, pattern making, electrical railroading, power stations, automobiles, gas engines, electrical wiring, armature and magnet winding, dynamo tending, elementary electricity, wireless telegraphy and telephony, carpentry and architecture, concrete construction, plumbing and heating, sign and house painting, amusements, etc., etc.

No matter what your ambition or desire for knowledge may be, we publish books **written by authorities in their different lines** that will give you just the training and information that you want and need.

Write today for this up-to-date and complete illustrated catalogue and popular price list. It is free.

FREDERICK J. DRAKE & CO.

PUBLISHERS OF SELF-EDUCATIONAL BOOKS

1006 Michigan Avenue CHICAGO

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 019 849 538 4